

*Wood*

A  
**COMMENTARY**  
Upon the Book of the  
**REVELATION.**

WHEREIN

The Text is explained, the Series of the several Prophecies contained in that Book, deduced according to their order and dependance upon each other; the periods and succession of times, at, or about which, these Prophecies, that are already fulfilled, began to be, and were more fully accomplished, fixed and applied according to History; And those that are yet to be fulfilled, modestly, and so far as is warrantable, enquired into.

*Together with*

Some practical Observations, and several Digressions, (an INDEX whereof is prefixed) necessary for vindicating, clearing, and confirming many weighty and important Truths.

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Delivered in several Lectures, by that learned, laborious, and faithful Servant of Jesus Christ.

Mr. **JAMES DURHAM,**  
Late Minister of the Gospel in *Glasgow*.

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To which is affixed a brief Summary of the whole REVELATION, with an Alphabetical *Index* of the chief and principal purposes and words contained in this Commentary.

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2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works.*

Revel. 1. 3. *Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this Prophecie, and keep those things that are written therein: for the time is at hand.*

Revel. 22. 7. *Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the Prophecie of this Book.*

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E D I N B U R G H

Printed by the Heir of *Andrew Anderson*, Printer to the Kings most Sacred Majesty, Anno D O M. 1680.



Jacobus Dierham Scotus, vir natalibus, ingenio, eruditione illustris, qui non paucos scriptos libris literarum  
honorum nobis acceperit, et cum totum magno cum studio in hac urbe, et a Nath. Polus in prefatione Tom:  
I. Synonym.

[illegible]

To the Judicious and Christian  
**R E A D E R.**



**T**H E Reverend (now triumphing and glorified) Author, was so famous and deservedly in very high esteem in our Church, both because of the singular and extraordinary way of Gods calling him forth to the Ministry of the Gospel, having left the University (wherein I was at the same time a Student) before he had finished his course of Philosophy, and without any purpose to follow his Book, at least in order to such an end; and having lived several years a private Gentleman with his wife and children, enjoying a good estate in the Country, from which he did, no doubt, to the great dissatisfaction of many of his natural friends, and with not-a little prejudice to his outward condition, retire, and (being called thereto) humbly offer himself to trials, far from his own home, in order to his being licentiated to preach the Gospel; in the Ministry whereof, he was immediately thereafter settled here at Glasgow, where it hath not wanted a seal in the consciences and hearts of his hearers: And also, because of his eminent piety, steadfastness, gravity, prudence, moderation, and other great abilities, whereof the venerable General Assembly of this Church had such persuasion, that they did, in the Year 1650. after mature deliberation, very unanimously pitch upon him, though then but about eight and twenty years of age, as amongst the ablest, sickrest, and most accomplished Ministers therein, to attend the Kings Family; in which station, though the times were most difficult, as abounding with tentations and snares, with jealousies, heart-burnings, emulations and animosities, and flowing with high tides of many various and not a few contrary humours, he did so wisely and faithfully behave and acquit himself, that there was a conviction thereof left upon the consciences of all who observed him, and so as he had peace through Jesus Christ as to that ministration: The Author, I say, was in these and other respects so famous, that he needs no Testimony or Epistles of commendation, especially from so obscure and worthless a person; yet, being of his particular and very intimate acquaintance, daily conversant with him, and withall his ordinary Hearer, being in a good providence Coleagued with him in the Ministry (though a most unequal joke-fellow to so strong a labourer) I thought it my duty to give thee some brief hint both of himself (who loved alwayes to be hid, except when it was necessary for him to appear) and of his Book, wherein thou wilt find that the spirit of Mr. Durham was not of an ordinary elevation; notwithstanding whereof, as, in Preaching the Gospel, he liked not to soar and hide himself from the Hearers in a cloud of words (it was not in the wisdom of words, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power that he taught) So in his Writing, he used the same plainness of speech; yet how low soever his stile seemeth to be, I nothing doubt but that every intelligent Reader will find such certainty of truth to satisfy the mind, and such sweetness of matter to engage the affections, that he will count the Author an Interpreter one among a thousand. And therefore, if at any time



To the Reader.

thou missest, as possibly thou mayest, that comptness and fineness of phrase, which in this phrasing and wordy age is much in use. Know that he had so very sharp and pregnant an ingine, and so exceeding rich and fruitful an invention, that they ordinarily did outstrip and go beyond his expression and pen, so that these could very hardly and but seldom hold foot with him: beside, if his expression was such as might make his meaning be conceived by the Hearers or Readers, he did not at all affect, neither could he stay, being so close in his pursuit of the matter, to chase, or follow after, fine words (so that I may here, without all complement, according to the proverb, say, *Aquila non captat muscas*;) yet none of his expressions were base or unsuitable to the matter, but, ordinarily, very massie, significant and expressive of his meaning, though plain and simple, and, it may be, sometimes not so beautifully situated, nor so adorning and out-setting of it, as possibly some would be at, which the Lord, in the depth of His wisdom, did so order, that, as the Author himself might be kept humble (and indeed he did exemplarily shine in humility) so no other should think of him above what was meet: for, it hath been thought by some, while hearing him discourse, that if he had had such a polished stile and so well combed words as several others have, whose matter yet falleth exceedingly short of his, he would have been looked upon as a very rare and singular man in his generation, as really he was, and as these same Lectures of his upon the Revelation (which he was by many importuned to publish) will readily give ground to think of him: which, though for substance (except as to these few intermixed solidly, succinctly, and, I hope, satisfyingly discussed questions) they were delivered by him to the people of his charge within a very short time, one of them every Lords-day before Sermon, when all that time he did also preach twice a week at least, and most ordinarily thrice, beside his daily publick Lecturing every fifth week according to his course in the City, and all his other Ministerial duties of Catechising, visiting of the sick, exhorting of the whole from house to house, and his weekly meetings with the Congregational Eldership for the exercise of Discipline, most dexterously, faithfully, condescendingly and indefatigably discharged by him towards about fifteen hundred souls, of whom he alone as Minister had the oversight; yet in the whole series and contexture thereof, thou wilt, notwithstanding, find as much solidity, sobriety and modesty, much quickness and sagacity, and very much plainness and perspicuity (considering the obscurity (comparative I mean) of this Scripture) which is rare, sweetly kissing and embracing each other; so likewise thou wilt discover, beside a clear explication of the Text of this Book and convincing proofs of the Pope of Rome his being that Antichrist (a main scope of it) even to the awakening of the lamentably decayed zeal of the people of God against that Beast, drunk with the blood of Saints, after whom, so considerable a part of the Christian world, and that to the great-offence of the Jews, is, alas, still wondering; thou wilt, I say, beside those, discover vast lecture in History, great light in the Scriptures, and very deep reach in the profoundest and most intricate things in Theology, to a publick profession whereof, in this University of Glasgow, he was sometime (to wit, a little before his being appointed to attend the Kings Family) by the Commissioners of the General Assembly, authorized for visiting the said University, most unanimously and solemnly designed and called, to the great satisfaction and refreshment of many, and more particularly and especially of famous and worthy Mr. Dickson, to whom the precious Author was chosen to succeed in that Profession, (he being called to a Profession of the same nature in the University of Edinburgh) as one of the ablest and best furnished men (all things being considered) in our Church, that were not already engaged in such employments, and most likely to fill Mr. Dicksons room: But, his work will speak for its self, and praise him in the gate, and, no doubt, provoke the Reader, as to bless God for him, so to lament the Churches great loss in the removal of such an useful Instrument, in the very flower, prime, and vigour of his grace, gifts and age, being but about six and thirty years: which loss, is so much the greater, that he was eminently and beyond

## To the Reader.

yond many, as several other wayes ; so, through the healing disposition, and great moderation of spirit given unto him, fitted to deal in the edification-obstructing differences of this poor, torn and divided Church, as may further afterwards appear by a Piece of his concerning Scandal, shortly, if the Lord will, to be published. I will not detain thee much longer from perusing of this Work, only I shall in short give thee an account (lest his way of Writing should be mistaken by any, because it differeth from that which others, especially of late, have followed to the no small edification of the Church of God) of the reasons inducing the Author (as he once passingly shewed me upon his death-bed) to insert these questions that are by way of digression more largely handled in this Book. 1. The importunity of some friends. 2. His perswasion of the soundness and in-offensiveness of the matter : wherein, though he hath here and there differed from some great men ; yet hath he carried the difference with so much meekness, and so few irritating or reflecting expressions, dealing only by the strength of simple reason, that he hath cast a copy, worthy to be followed by others in this cristick age. 3. Some apprehension, that to not a few that way of touching upon some questions might be more pleasing and taking. 4. To prevent drowning, as it were, in following the series and tract of the story and Commentary, according to the practice of several Learned and worthy men in their Writings upon the Scripture. 5. Because the clearing of some places along the Book it self did call for several of them. 6. That if they might any way at all be useful, they should not altogether perish, there having been no other convenient way for the publishing of them ; and indeed it had been a pity to have smothered and kept them from seeing the light, for I have sometimes heard him in his sickness, profess, that (however feeble they were) as he had peace in his mind, that there was no new, uncouth or strange thing in them, So he could not deny but that sometimes in them and other parts of the Book, he had found God sensibly assisting and carrying him through beyond his own expectation. Now, desiring that these labours of the Author, which were intermixed with much prayer to God (for, all the while he was a Lecturing upon this Scripture (and since) there was a considerable part of a day every week extraordinarily set apart for prayer, as for other causes, so, no doubt, for seeking Gods help in that work) desiring, I say, that these prayer-full labours of his may be richly blest of God to thee, for making thee read the Revelation (which, it may be, hath lyen by thee, for most of it at least, as a sealed book hitherto) with more understanding, edification and comfort than ever ; and desiring withall, that the bright and Morning-Star, who holdeth the Stars in His right hand, may illuminate and fix many Stars of such magnitude, and keep them brightly shining in the firmament of His Church, for the direction, guidance and comfort thereof in these cloudy and sad times, I am, at least would be, Christian,

Glasgow, the 23. of  
September, 1658.

Thy servant for CHRISTs sake,  
in the work of the Gospel,

JOHN CARSTAIRS.

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READER,



READER,



Being desired to speak my knowledge of this subsequent Work, I acknowledge that I was one who frequently encouraged the Author to let it go abroad. For, however he had no time to polish it, and what is here almost all was taken from his mouth by the pen of an ordinary hearer: yet I am assured, the matter of it, as I heard it weekly delivered, is so precious as cannot but be very welcome and acceptable to the world of Believers. I am confident, that the gracious design which some worthy Brethren among us have in hand, and have now far advanced to the good satisfaction of all who have tasted of the first fruits of their Labours, of making the body of holy Scriptures plain and useful to vulgar capacities, is not a little furthered by this Piece: For, albeit with greater length (as the nature of the Book of necessity did require) than these Brethrens design of shortness doth admit; yet it maketh very plain and useful that without all question hardest of all Scriptures. This I can say, that diverse of the most obscure texts of that holy Book, which I understood little at the beginning of his Lecture, before he closed his Exercise, were made to me so clear, that I judged his Exposition might well be acquiesced into without much more debate.

That wit were more than ordinary weak, which durst promise from the pen of any man a clear and certain Exposition of all the Revelation before the day of performance of these very deep and mysterious Prophecies. It was not for nought, that most judicious Calvin and acute Beze, with many other profound Divines, would never be moved to attempt any Explication of that Book: Yet I hope I may make bold to affirm, without hazard of any heavy censure, that there is here laid such a bridge over that very deep river, that who ever goeth over it, shall have cause to bless God for the Authors labour.

The Epistle speaketh to the man, I shall add but this one word, That from the day I was employed by the Presbytery to preach and pray and to impose, with others, hands upon him for the Ministry at Glasgow, I did live to the very last with him in great and uninterrupted love, and in an high estimation of his egregious endowments, which made him to me precious among the most excellent Divines I have been acquainted with in the whole Isle. O if it were the good pleasure of the Master of the Vineyard to plant many such noble Vines in this Land! I hope many more of his Labours shall follow this first, and that the more quickly as this doth receive the due and expected acceptance.

Thine in the LORD,

ROBERT BALIE.

# An INDEX of the principal Questions and Controversies which are discussed and cleared in this TREATISE.

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Reader, Thou wilt find the particulars, relating to each of these Heads, digested in the following Table at the end of the Book, according to the order of the Alphabet: And besides, in the perusal of the Book, thou wilt find a delectable variety of other concerning-questions, right satisfyingly, though but shortly, handled.

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Reader,  
**I**N your reading, be pleased to take notice, that you will find the 40 Page plac'd for the 36, and 35 for 40. which escape of inadvertency, you are intreated to help by your own pains.



An Index of the principal Questions and Controversies  
which are discussed and cleared in this Treatise.



A N  
EXPOSITION  
Of the BOOK of the  
REVELATION!

LECTURE I.

CHAP. I.

Verf. 1. **T**HE Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto His Servants things which must shortly come to passe; and He sent and signified it by His Angel unto His Servant John:

2. Who bare record of the Word of God, and of the Testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

3. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this Prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

4. John to the seven Churches in Asia, Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come, and from the seven Spirits which are before His Throne.

**I**T may look well presumptuous-like to read, or undertake to open this Book: and indeed there is need of much humility and soberness in going about such a work, and that the Spirit of Jesus Christ, who hath given this Book for a benefit to His Church, help us to a right uptaking of it; Yet, considering that the subject matter of it, is so profitable and comfortable to the Church, to the end of the World; considering also what was Christs end in giving it, as His last Will and Word, to His Church, to wit, to be a Revelation, and thereby to make manifest His mind to them: therefore John is forbidden to seal it, that it might be open for the good of His Church; and considering withal the many motives and encouragements that are given to read and search into it, as *verf. 3. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this Prophecy*: which saying,

is also renewed again after the prophetick part is immediatly closed, *chap. 22. 7, 14.* which seem to be notable encouragements, not only to undertake, but also to lay it on as a duty, to read and seek to understand it. We resolve, through Gods grace, to essay it, that it be not altogether useles to the Servants of God to whom it is sent, as *verf. 1.* It is true, many things in it are obscure; and it is like, that the full clearing of them is not to be expected, till God in some singular way shall open them up, (neither is that undertaken) Yet, there are, 1. many clear, edifying, and comfortable passages of Gods mind in it; the holy Ghost mixing in those to be fed upon, and to sweeten those passages that are more obscure; and to encourage the Reader to search for the meaning of them. And, 2. though we be not clear to apply such passages to this or that particular time, or party, or person; Yet, seeing the scope sets out, in general, the enmity of special enemies of the Church; and it being clear who they are: we think they may be expounded not only accord-



ing to the Analogy of Faith and sound Doctrine, but according to the scope of the place, though every thing hit not, yet nothing being contrary to it. 3. In those things that are most obscure, there may be found Doctrines concerning the disposition of enemies, and Gods giving victory over them, and preservation and out-gate to His People. And lastly, those things that are most obscure, being particulars, wherein there is no such hazard for us to be ignorant, as in fundamental Truths; and yet being such as God hath allowed folks by wisdom to search out: therefore, *here is wisdom*, is prefixed to the hardest places in it, as *chap. 13. ver. ult.* Upon these considerations, we intend (through the Lords help) to hint at some things in the reading of this Book to you, for your up-stirring to search further into it. The whole strain and form of it, is by way of an Epistle, Jesus Christ, by *John*, writing His last Will to His Church.

The Preface is in the words read, to *ver. 9.* The Body of it, from that to the *6. ver. chap. 22.* The Conclusion, is in the end of the *22. chap.* where it is closed with the ordinary close of other Epistles. We shall first speak to the Preface, and then to the Body, when we come to it. We need not stand upon the Authority, nor Title of it that holds out the Pen-man; it being of such a divine stamp and Majesty, doth carry Authority in the bosom of it, that if any Scripture hold forth the Sovereignty, Majesty, Justice, Mercy and Truth of God, to the comfort of His People, and the making the hearts of His Enemies to quake, this Scripture doth it. The Author, that is, the Pen-man; is *John the Divine*, as he is holden out in the Title. Whether this Title be authentick or not, it's not much to be disputed. It is in some Greek Copies, *The Revelation of the holy Apostle and Evangelist, John the Divine.* And, we think it is clear to be *John*, the Apostle, honoured here to bear Christs last Message to His Church. He got this name in the primitive times, as being most full of Divine Revelations, and prying into the Mysteries of the Gospel, and particularly of Christs Divinity. And in the Preface there seems to be some things that bear this out, 1. That he is called *John*, without designing what *John*, importing that he was the *John*, that was well known and famous for an infallible and extraordinary measure of the Spirit. 2. He is said to be that *John*, that was banished into the Isle of *Patmos*: which, from the ancient famous story, is clear to be *John*, the Apostle, he being banished thither under the persecution of *Domitian* the Emperour. 3. It's further clear, from the *2. ver.* in his description, *who bare record of the word of God, and of the Testimony of Jesus Christ*, which relates to his writing of the Gospel, as he styles himself in the close of it, *chap. 21. 24. This is that Disciple, which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things, and we know that his Testimony is true.* Neither doth it make any thing against this, that this Book (being propheticall) doth differ somewhat in stile from his other Writings: for, the stile is not so unlike his; there being many words and phrases in his Gospel, and in several Chapters of this Book so like one another; as, that Christ is called the word, and the Lamb, in the one and in the other, these phrases being peculiar to Him.

The Preface hath two parts. First, A general Inscription of the Book, *ver. 1. 2. 3.* Secondly, A particular Inscription and Direction to the seven Churches in *Asia*, to which the seven Epistles in the second and third Chapters are written, from *ver. 4. to ver. 9.* And there are several particulars in every one of these. To begin with the Inscription. *The Revelation*, that is, the making open and unfolding of some things, obscure: and though they be still obscure to us, yet not in themselves, nor to us now, as they were before this. 2. It's of *Jesus Christ*: First, Because given out by Jesus Christ, to *John*, as from the Administrator and great Prophet of His Church: And secondly, Because much of this Revelation concerned the governing of

His Church. Thirdly, *which God gave unto him*: which denotes the order of the Persons in their subsisting and operations; the Father working from Himself, by the Son; and the way of Christs working as Mediatour, who doth the will of Him that sent Him: for, as God, He understands all things essentially by Himself, but as Mediatour, He hath that given and communicated to Him. Fourthly, The end of this work, is, *To shew unto His Servants things which must shortly come to passe*, that this Revelation may not be kept up, but made forth-coming to His Servants: by whom is understood not all Creatures, nor all in the visible Church, nor only such special Servants by Office, as *John* was; but such as were and are His Fellowers, Subjects, and Believers in Him in the visible Church. Fifthly, The subject of this Revelation, *things which must shortly come to passe*, not things past, nor so much things present, (though in the second and third Chapter, such things be spoken to) as mainly, things to come. And it's said, *That they must shortly come to passe*: because, though the full accomplishment of them was not to be till the end of the world, as will be clear from the Prophecy, and therefore those events cannot be confined within some few years; yet, the beginning of the fulfilling of them was instantly upon the back of this Revelation. Sixthly, *He sent and signified it by His Angel*, that is, Jesus Christ made use of the ministration of His Angel to signify this, both to set out His dignity and grandour, and to conciliate the greater credit to it. Seventhly, The person it is revealed to, is, *His Servant John*; His Servant by special Delegation and Office, in a special Employment, as a Steward in His House.

1. Observe the great advantage and benefit, the privilege and prerogative that Christs Servants have beyond all others; Christ writes His Letters to them; there is not a word written to Kings and great men; but it is *shew His Servants things to come to passe*: To be His Servants, is to be Gods free-men: and they win hardest benn upon His Secrets and Mysteries, *Psal. 25. The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will shew them His Covenant.*

2. Observe Christs way of Administration: Though this Revelation be sent to His Servants; yet not immediately, but first it is given to Christ, and He gives it to His Angel, and the Angel gives it to *John*, and he brings it out to the Churches. Jesus Christ must have His own place; and the first notice of any thing, concerning the good of the Church, comes to Him as Mediatour; and He doth nothing but He first reveals it to His Servants the Prophets, *Amos 3.* They are His Servants of State to bear His Mind to His People.

*Ver. 2.* The second thing in the Preface, is, A description of *John*, *who bare record of the word of God*: which may relate to the Gospel of *John*, which holds out Jesus Christ, who was, and is the substantial Word of God, as he begins his Gospel. 2. *And of the Testimony of Jesus Christ*, which may look to his Epistles. 3. *And of all things that he saw*: this looks to the particular Visions God gave him in this Book. *John's bearing record*, points out his faithfulness according to the Charge and Commission given him; what is given him to deliver, he keeps not up; what he receives in charge, he discharges.

3. We have the commendation of this Book, *ver. 3.* to stir up folks to make use of it, because He knew many would scarse at it, and be ready to let it lye beside them as useles and unprofitable: whereas all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable, &c. *2 Tim. 3. 16.* Therefore this is added, *Blessed is he that readeth*; that is, this Book is not a thing to be spoken of only, and not to be read and studied: for, the Seals of it are opened; and blessed are they that read it. It's a happy and a good thing, soberly and humbly to read, and to seek to understand it: and because every one cannot read, he adds, *And blessed are they that hear the words of this Prophecy*; it may relate not only to private, but to publick reading and hearing

hearing of this Book, when it is read and exposed; So that by Christ's own Ordinance, this Book is to be brought forth to His People: and, because folks are ready to grow vain and secure, and to rest upon reading and hearing. He adds another word, and keep those sayings that are written therein, that is, it's not the reading; nor the hearing simply, that will bring the blessing; but the observing and making right use of it. Then He adds a reason why He would have it read and heard, and the sayings of it observed and made use of, *because the time is at hand*, the fulfilling of the things in this Book, is at hand; the time hasteth of calling folks to a reckoning, what use they have made of those sayings; the time of pouring out His wrath on His Enemies, and of being very kind to His Church and People, is at hand.

1. *Observe*, It's a good thing to be studying the Scripture: it's a mark of the blessed man, *Psal. 1*. It makes the man of God wise to salvation; and it's good that those who want the use of reading themselves, make up that want by hearing others: and particularly, it is good to be reading, and hearing this Book read; those that are fitted for reading, let them use it well; and those that have not this benefit, let them take and improve other opportunities that may bring them to the knowledge of Christ's mind; and the more, that blessedness is given but to six or seven sorts in this Book, and twice or thrice over, to those that study it, *Rev. 22. 7, 14*.

2. *Observe*, That it's not enough to be given to reading and hearing of the Word: neither would folks rest on it; but joyn practise with both, *Luke 11. 28*. *Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it*. It is not the reader, or hearer, but the doer, that is the blessed man. Yea, though ye were able to open and unfold all the Mysteries that are in this Book, if ye be not suitable and conform thereto in your practise, ye are but like that man spoken of, *Jam. 1. 23, 24*. who, *beholding his natural face in a glasse, goeth his way, and forgetteth what manner of man he was*. He that is a hearer, and not a doer, deceives his own soul; as much hearing and reading doth you good, as is improved in practise.

Quest. *How is this Book called a Prophecy, seeing some things in it concern things present, as in these Epistles, written to the seven Churches in Asia?*

Ans. Prophecies are of two sorts. 1. Prophecy, is that whereby things past or present are known by an instinct of the Spirit: So *Moses* writeth of the Creation of the World, and things that were before his time; So *Abijah* knew the wife of *Jeroboam*; and *Elisba* discovered the King of Syria his Connel, and the covetousness of *Gebazi*: And, in this respect, as well as in reference to things to come, this Book may be called a Prophecy; because those things that are present are revealed by the Spirit. 2. Prophecy, is of things to come: and in this respect, it's called a Prophecy; because the main drift of this Book of the *Revelation*, is, to shew things to come, the first three Chapters being introductory to the rest.

*Vers. 4*. Followeth the second part of the Preface; and it's the particular Inscription and Direction of this Epistle to the seven Churches in Asia, *John to the seven Churches in Asia*, and it beginneth as the Epistles ordinarily begin, *Grace be unto you, and peace*. Where we have, 1. the thing wished, *Grace and Peace*. 2. The persons to whom, *the seven Churches*. 3. The Persons from whom, the Three Persons of the Trinity. 4. And upon the back of this, a thanksgiving. *John*, is the person wishing; that which is wished, is, *Grace and Peace*, two words, which comprehend all good: *Grace*, is the fountain of Gods free love; and *Peace*, the effect of that free love: which being here put together, is love, vented in its precious effects. The Persons from whom, are Three, or, the Three Persons of the Trinity, 1. From the Father, *which is, which was, and which is to come*, that is, from God the Father, described from

His eternal being, without all beginning or ending. And this description of the Father, relates to that of *Exod. 3. 14*. *I AM THAT I AM*, *hath sent me unto you*: and it is a name that God often taketh to Himself, *the first and the last*, the beginning and the ending: and the Title *JEHOVAH* taketh up these three; *JE*, the future time; *HO*, the time present; *VAH*, the time past. In a word, it's the paraphrase of the word *JEHOVAH*: and this Title is attributed to the Father, not secluding the Son and Holy Ghost; but the Father, being the fountain of the Godhead, when He is joyned with the Son and Spirit, those things that are essential to God, are ordinarily attributed to Him. 2. From the seven Spirits: These are not creatures, or created spirits: for, first, created spirits are not objects of worship, from whom we may wish *Grace and Peace*. Secondly, neither are created spirits set in betwixt the Father and the Son, as those seven Spirits are here. Thirdly, In the 5. chap. *ver. 6*. those seven Spirits, are called the *Eyes* and *Horns* of the Lamb: *Eyes* being His Omniscience, whereby He sees every where; and *Horns*, being His Power, working by His Spirit, and making stub-born souls submit unto Him: and these seven Spirits being His *Eyes*, which are every where; and His *Power* or *Omnipotency*, which here also are invocated, They can be no other but the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is called the *seven Spirits*; not only, because it's frequent in this Book of the *Revelation* to go on the number of Seven; but also, and mainly, to shew the manifold and various operations of the Spirit, as *1 Cor. 12. 4, 6*. *There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; and diversities of operations, but the same God, which worketh all in all*. 2. Because it hath relation to the seven Churches He is to write to, their need requiring much; and He being an infinit and powerful Spirit, He was able to let out abundance of grace and all consolation to every one without prejudice to another, as if each of them had the Spirit wholly. Therefore He is so described in this with. Secondly, These seven Spirits are said to be *before the Throne*, that is, present with God, yet made use of by God the Father and the Son, working by the Spirit, effectually communicating what may be for the comfort of His People: and in these words, the holy Spirit is holden out in a posture, apt to execute what is needfull. The third Person is in the 5. *ver. And from Jesus Christ*; *Grace and Peace* is wished from Him: He is set out in His Three Offices of Prophet, Priest; and King. First, In His Prophetical Office, *The faithful witness*, because He reveals the Will of God, and that faithfully: therefore, *Isai. 55. 10*. He is given as a Witness, a Leader and Commandant to the People. Secondly, In His Priestly Office, *The first begotten of the dead*: To shew, 1. that He offered up Himself to the death. 2. Because He was the first that rose from the dead in His own strength, and made others to rise, and He died not again: for, though *Lazarus* rose, he died again, and though *Enoch* and *Elijah* did not die, yet that was by virtue of His Power and Resurrection, as also that any other did arise. Thirdly, In His Kingly Office, *The Prince of the Kings of the Earth*: which Title sets out Christ, not only to be God, equal with the Father, but as Mediatour, King of His Kirk. He is called, *Prince of the Kings of the Earth*, not as if Kings; and all great men, or others, were in the same manner subjects to Him in the relation that Believers are (in which respect His Kingly Office extendeth no further, nor His Priestly and Prophetical Office) but though so He have not such a near relation to them, nor they to Him; Yet He is King over them, to restrain them that they prejudice not His Kirk; and to judge them for any wrongs or prejudice they do to them, and to inflict temporal judgements on them here, and eternal hereafter, when He shall be their Judge, and the Books shall be opened at the great Day. The wish is from the Three Persons: and though the Holy Ghost be here named before the Son, it is not to confound the order that is among the Persons of the Trinity



In Their subsisting and operations; but for this reason, because John is to insist on Jesus Christ the second Person, he keeps Him last in naming, to make the progress in his writing the more clear.

*Observe*, There are three distinct Persons of the blessed Trinity, the Father, Son, and Spirit, who are the same one God: in the Name of these Three, is Baptism administrated; and from Them, Grace is wished and prayed for, 2 Cor. 13. 14. For; 1. That there are Three, who are distinctly mentioned here, cannot be denied; that the first is the Father; and the third, Jesus Christ, really distinct from the Father, is clear: for, the Son, and not the Father, was incarnate: and therefore the like must be said of the seven Spirits, that they set forth the Holy Ghost personally, seeing it is He who in the like places useth to be joyned in with the Father and the Son, as 2 Cor. 13. 13. 1 Joh. 5. 7, 8, and therefore it's said in the seven Epistles, to be what the Spirit saith. These Seven Spirits therefore, is that one Spirit, and He a person that speaketh to the Churches. Secondly, That each of these Three must be God, appears, 1. Because the last Two are both joyned as equal with the Father, of whom there can be no question. 2. Because the Son, Jesus Christ, afterward, hath the same Title attributed to Him, which is here given to the Father. 3. Because the same one suit, is prayed for from all of them; and, it being Grace and Peace, which only God can give, suppones divine essential Attributes to be in those from whom they are wished: yea, They are named here, as joyned Senders of this Epistle, and Authorizers of this Word; therefore is it so often afterward said, *Let him that hath ears, hear what the Spirit saith*: and there can no Authority but what is divine, be sufficient here. Hence also, *Thus saith the Lord*, and, *thus saith the Holy Ghost*, are frequently put for one another: each one therefore of these Three

must be God. 3. It may appear from this also, that all these Three are One God, thus, This Revelation and Salvation cometh from one God, chap. 1. ver. 1. and 22. 18, 19. and yet this Revelation and Salutation cometh from the Father, Son, and Spirit: therefore They are that One God. Again, If the Grace and Peace proceed from one Essence, which is common to all, then they are the same God essentially, though distinct Persons; but Grace and Peace looks to the same Godhead and Essence, though it be wished for from all, for the effect, Grace and Peace, is but one, it doth therefore suppose an unity in the fountain from which it comes, to wit, these Three Persons of the glorious Godhead, who are named distinctly, not to shew a different effect from the Father, which is not from the Son; but to shew the concurrence of these blessed Three in an united way for bringing forth of these; so that what cometh from the Father, cometh also from the Son and Spirit. These essential Attributes, and that most simple and infinite Essence, being common to all the Three Persons, it rests therefore that they are Three distinct Persons, and yet of the same infinite Godhead. Neither will that which the Socinians and others oppose to this place, have weight. Say they, *Christ is spoken of here, as dead*; Therefore cannot be God. For, it's one thing to speak of Him who was dead, another to say that It speaks of Him as such. He that died was God, but He died not as God: and therefore this can only prove, that Jesus Christ, as to His Person, is man; but by it, we can no more deny Him to be the second Person of the Godhead, than afterward when He is called *the first and the last*, by that, we can deny Him to be man. And that the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are equal with the Father, appeareth also in this, That they are both equally with Him, the object of divine Worship here, to wit, of Invocation and Prayer, which could not otherwise be.

### Concerning the Holy Trinity and Object of Worship.

There is much spoken of the Glory of God in this Book; and no where is the distinction of the Persons of the glorious Godhead more frequently and clearly set forth. John was more full in this than any who wrote before him; because then in his time *Ebion* and some others had arisen, who did deny the Godhead of the Son and Holy Ghost; and therefore, with a particular respect to These, he did write the more fully of this, for which he got the stile of *Divine* singularly, as was marked on the Title. It will not therefore be impertinent now, once for all, to touch that a little further: and although here curiosity would be restrained, full satisfaction in the up-taking of that Myserie being peculiarly reserved to that time when we shall see Him as He is, as our Lord's word, Joh. 14. 20. *Then ye shall know that I am in the Father*, doth import; and therefore we would not presume to satisfy our selves in the *Aspects*, or particular manner how that is; but humbly be contented to have our Faith solidly grounded in the *Aspects*, or being thereof: which may be done by considering these three, to wit, 1. the truth of the thing, 2. the expressions used in holding of it forth, and, 3. the necessity of the believing thereof.

For the first; we say, That as there is but one God essentially, so there are three distinct, co-equal, co-essential, and consubstantial Persons of that blessed Godhead, the Father, Son, and Spirit, who yet in a most wonderful, excellent and infinitely perfect (though an inconceivable) manner, have an order of subsisting and working amongst Themselves. It was a saying amongst the Ancients, That to speak of God, even that which was truth, was dangerous; (*Etiam de Deo dicere verum, est periculosum*); and, indeed, here is ought to be remembered. For may we consider the former general Proposition in these

1. *Affert*. There is but one God essentially considered: and in this the Scripture is clear, and so in this Book, chap. 1. and last; although there be a plurality of Persons mentioned, yet it is ever God spoken of as One, in the singular number; and thus He is still opposed as the One living God, to the plurality of Idols. And indeed, there be no plurality in this: for, if that One God have in Him all perfections, There can be no perfection beside Him; and so no God beside this One true God. And, if we supposed any perfection to be beside Him, then were not He God, because not infinite in perfection; and, if infinite, then that which is infinite, in that respect, cannot be multiplied. There is no question of this, seeing the most wise Heathens have been necessitated to acknowledge it.

2. *Affert*. Although there be but One God, yet there are Three Persons, the Father, Son, and Spirit. There is not one of these Epistles to the seven Churches, but this may be gathered from it, 1. The Father, the Sender of them all, as from ver. 1. chap. 1. may be gathered. 2. The Son is He who immediatly gives John Commission to write, as the Titles he taketh to himself do clear. 3. The holy Ghost is in the close of all, mentioned as a joyned speaker, *Let him hear what the Spirit saith*, &c. 2. More particularly, They are distinctly mentioned in the Epistle to Thyatira, chap. 2. ver. 18, *These things saith the Son of God*, that holds forth the Father and Son: where a son is, there is a father; and God here is personally taken as another from the Son. And ver. 29. we have the Spirit as distinct from both. 3. They are put together, chap. 3. 1. *These things saith He that hath the seven Spirits of God*: He, that is, the Son formerly mentioned; God, that is, the Father, distinctly considered as another Person; the seven Spirits, that is, the holy Ghost, in whose name John saluted the Churches formerly, and



and who is to be heard, as the close of every Epistle sheweth. 4. The like is, *ver. 12.* where the Son speaketh in the first Person, I and *Mt.* The Father is designed by the title *G O D*; the Spirit again, as distinct from both, *ver. 13.* 5. The same may be gathered from *ver. 14.* with 22. where the faithful witness, God, and the Spirit, are mentioned as three that are distinct. 6. And lastly, *chap. 5.* we have Them most fully distinguished, First, there is the Father, on the Throne, with the Book in His hand, *ver. 1.* Secondly, There is the Lamb, the Son: And thirdly, The seven Spirits of God, the holy Ghost, *ver. 6.* all of them considered as distinct Persons.

3. *Affert.* These Three, Father, Son, and Spirit, are really distinct one from another: and so are Three Persons. All that is said, doth confirm this also: for, 1. They are really distinct, though not simply in respect of their essence; yet, as they are personally considered, the Father, is not the Son; and He that sits upon the Throne, is not the Lamb. The Father did not become man, nor the Spirit; but the Son, He died, was buried, &c. which can be said of none, but of a person; and yet cannot be said of either of the other Two. The holy Ghost is the Spirit of God, as the Son is the Son of God; and if that suppose a real distinct personality, this must do also; the Son sayes, so doth the holy Ghost or Spirit say to the Churches: the Father is God, the first, and last; the Son hath the same Title, *chap. 2.* 8. even He who was dead, is the first, and the last; the Spirit hath the same authority, and is to be heard, and hath a divine omnipresence to be in all the earth, *chap. 5.* 6. which can be said of none but of Him that is God. Now, if the Father be God, and the Son God, and the Spirit God also; and if there be but one God, and yet these Three be really distinct, then They must be distinct Persons in respect of Their personal properties, seeing they are Persons, and distinct.

4. *Affert.* Although They be Three distinct Persons, as to Their personal properties; yet are They all Three One God, essentially considered; and all have the same infinite indivisible Essence, though we cannot conceive how. This follows on the former: for, if there be Three Persons, and each of them be God, and yet there be but One God, then each of these Persons must be the same One God, co-equal and co-essential: so the Father is *alius*, another from the Son, and each of Them from other; but He is not *aliud*, or another thing, but the same. Hence, the Son, is the Son of God; and the Spirit, the Spirit of God: They are upon one Throne, *chap. 5.* They concur by the same Authority and Sovereignty to write; and He that sends this Epistle to the Churches, is but One God, *chap. 1.* 1. who therefore will avenge adding thereto, or diminishing therefrom, *chap. 22.* yet that One God, is the same Three Persons, *chap. 1.* *ver. 4.*

*Affert.* 5. These Three blessed Persons, who are One most glorious Being, have yet an inconceivable order in their subsisting and working; which, being to be admired rather than to be searched, we shall but say, 1. They have all the same One Essence and Being, as is said. 2. They all have it eternally, equally and perfectly: none is more or less God, but each hath all the same Godhead at perfection: and therefore must have it equally and eternally: for, the Godhead is the same, and the Son is the first and the last, as the Father is; and the Father and Son, were never without the Spirit, who is the Spirit of God, and each of Them is God. It doth confirm all these, that They have One Throne, Name, and Authority attributed to Them. Yet, 3. The Father subsists of Himself, and doth beget the Son by an inconceivable and eternal generation: the Son doth not beget, but is begotten, and hath His subsisting, as the second Person, from the Father. So much the titles of Father and Son import here: the Spirit proceeds both from the Father (therefore He is the Spirit of the Father) and from

the Son, therefore is He said also to have the seven Spirits of God and the Spirit doth neither beget, nor is begotten, but doth thus, in an inexpressible manner, proceed from Them both.

For the second. If any should wrangle for the expressions that are used by Divines in this Myserie; we confesse that many of the Schoolmen have exceeded, and have taken too much liberty in this wonderful Myserie; yet, it is the thing that we especially should be established in, and from Scripture that is clear, that there is but One God, and yet Three, who being denominated in the concrete, must imply three different real Relations, or Substances, or Persons: and this Essence being infinite and communicable, there is no warrant to bound it to the rules and properties of created beings, who are but finite; and in that respect also incommunicable: And we conceive that the names here given (and elsewhere in Scripture) will amount clearly to the equivalent of Essence and Persons, which are most obviously made use of in this matter: for, what is that, *I am Alpha and Omega, who was, is, and is to come*, but that same, *Exod. 3.* *I AM THAT I AM*, which denoteth His Being or Essence, as that which is ever a Being: and Idols, being differenced from the true God by this, that they are by Nature no gods, *Gal. 4.* 8. it implies on the contrary, that by Nature He is God, and so God in respect of Essence. and therefore that God may be essentially considered, that respect of His Essence. Again, these expressions, that the one is called the Father, and the other the Son, and yet both One God, do clearly hold forth that there are real relations in that Godhead, subsisting in a distinct manner; and so there must be Persons, as *Heb. 1.* the Son, is called the expresse Image of the Fathers Person, which plainly sayes, that the Father, considered as distinguished from the Son, is a Person, and subsists; and that the Son, as distinguished from the Father, and as so lively and expressly representing His Person, must be a Person also, having this from the Father: and what is said of the Father and Son, must also be true of the holy Ghost, who is God equal with both; yet different from Them both, as They differ from each other, though not in respect of that same incommunicable property, yet he who proceedeth, must differ from those from whom he proceeds, as he who is begotten, must differ from him that beget him.

For Their operations, we may find here, that in some things They concur jointly, yet some way differently. Some things again are attributed to one, which cannot be to another, as their personal properties; the Son is begotten, and not the Father or the Spirit: therefore He is allanerly the Son: the Father begets; and the Spirit proceeds. These are called Their personal properties, and Their works *ad intra*, or amongst, or in reference to Themselves: of this kind is the incarnation of the Son, which can neither be said of the Father, nor of the holy Ghost. Again, in things *ad extra*, or that relate to the Creatures simply, whether in making, or governing of the World, They jointly concur: the Father createth all, so doth the Son and holy Ghost; the Son, from the Father, by the holy Ghost; the holy Ghost, from the Father and the Son, as those expressions of God, sending His Son, the Son's sending the Spirit from the Father, &c. do declare, *Joh. 14.* 26. and 16. 7. *Gal. 4.* 6.

To the third. This Truth concerning the blessed and glorious Trinity, being so often insisted on here, and coming so near to the nature of God Himself, it cannot but be exceedingly necessary for Christians to be thorough in the faith thereof: yet it is questioned of late, whether it be to be accounted a fundamental point of Faith or not? I say, this of late is questioned by Socinus, and the favourers a boundless intolerable Toleration: for, of old it was most sacredly received as such, amongst the Ancients, as the Creeds that are called Apostolick, Nicene, and that of Athanasius, do manifest: But this

this Engine the Devil drives, first, to make the most necessary Truth indifferent, that then he may the more easily engage opposers to quarrel the very Truth of them it self; but we conceive, whatever it was of old before Christ, yet now it is to be looked on, not only as a Truth, which is clear from the Word, but also as a fundamental Truth; which being shaken, would overturn Christianity, and the way of Salvation that the Lord hath revealed in His Gospel. This is not to be extended to a rigid degree of knowledge in this wonderful Myserie, but to so much clearness in this Truth from the Word, as may be a ground to Faith in the thing it self. And that this is necessary, as a fundamental, we think ariseth clearly from these three grounds. 1. That Truth, without which the true God cannot be taken up, believed in, and worshipped, is a fundamental Truth; but, this Truth of the Trinity of Persons, and Unity of the Godhead, is such, that without it, that God, which is proposed in the Word, and is the only true God, and the object of all Worship, can neither be taken up, believed in, nor worshipped rightly: *Ergo, &c.* because the true God is One, and yet Three Persons; and as such, hath proposed Himself to be known and worshipped. 2. That Truth without which the work of Redemption would be overturned, is fundamental; But this is such: for, by taking away the Myserie of the Trinity, they take away the Godhead and Personality of the Mediatour, and so do enervat His satisfaction. And, as on the former accompt, the true God is otherwise conceived than He is in Himself; so, in this respect, the Mediatour is made a quite other thing. And, can any thing be fundamental, if this be not? 3. The way that God hath laid down in His Worship, requireth this, seeing in Baptism there is particular and expresse mentioning of these Three, the *Father*, *Son* and *Spirit*, as the Superior, to whom they that are Christian Souldiers, should be listed and inrolled: and so we may accompt of all after-worship; seeing God requires us to honour the Son, as we honour the Father; and seeing these Three equally witness from Heaven, 1 *John* 5. the *Father*, *Word*, and *Spirit*; all which Three, are One: can their Testimony be received as of Three, or can they be accompted as *One* God without this? And yet there can neither be *one*, in Faith, engaged unto in Baptism, or *one*, whose Testimony we may receive, but He who is God: and can any think but it's necessary for a Christian, and that, fundamentally, to know to whom they are devoted, whom they are to worship, whose Testimony it is that they receive, whose operations they feel, whom they are to make use of, &c? And therefore it's necessary to know the Trinity of Persons in that One Godhead.

It may be the exercise of some tender soul, that they know not how to apprehend this Object rightly, when they come to worship; and that often they are disquieted, while their minds are unstable: Concerning this, there is need here to distinguish betwixt what may satisfy us as to the Object in it self, and what may be sufficient to us in directing of our Worship to that Object: If we take up God as in Himself, here is a depth that cannot be searched out to perfection: *He is broader than the Sea; Who can know Him? higher than the Heaven, What can we do, Job* 11. 8? But yet we have footing in His Word, how to come before this God with fear, reverence, holy admiration, &c. and such affections and qualifications as a true Worshipper that worships in spirit ought to have; and in this, the pure Worshippers, who believe this Truth of One Infinite God and Three Persons, ought to be taken up, rather that they may be suitable in their worshipping, and have becoming effects on their own hearts, than to be disquieting themselves by poring too curiously on the Object worshipped; except in so far as may serve to transform the heart into a likeness to Him. And, it is not aiming to comprehend the mysteriousness and manner of these incomprehensible Myseries, that doth work this; but the real,

through and near impression of the general, which is revealed clearly in His Word. We would therefore commend these three in Worship. 1. That folks would satisfy themselves in the general with the solid faith thereof, without descending to particular conceptions or notions concerning the Persons of the blessed Godhead: this particularness, is often that which both confuses the mind, and disquiets the conscience, and cannot but do so in those who would be at the looking upon God immediately here, without making use of the expressions, Titles, Names, &c. whereby He hath manifested Himself to us, and wherein, we conceive, it's safest to rest, and to bound all our curiosity within those: for, they must be the most solid notions of God, which Himself hath taught: Thus, *Exod.* 33. and 34. The Lord did answer *Moses* his desire of seeing His Glory, by shewing him His goodness in the proclaiming of His Attributes to him that are manifested in His Word: thereby teaching men to conceive of God, according as He hath revealed Himself in His Word, in the plain and comprehensive Attributes that describe His Nature, wherein Gods goodness is sufficiently holden forth to sinners, which ought to be a sufficient manifestation of God to them here, without diving immediately into His Essence, which could no otherways be manifested to *Moses* than by that proclamation. 2. We would beware of forming Ideas, representations, or shapes of that One God and Three Persons in the heart, or in the head: these cannot but be derogatory to Him, being a *likeness* to Him of our own up-setting in our hearts: and cannot but diminish that Authority, which the true God should have in our hearts. We would remember therefore that He is purely Spiritual, whom no eye hath seen, nor can see: and therefore all such imaginations, are to be abandoned and abhorred. 3. We would beware of dividing the Object of Worship, or separating the Three blessed Persons in our worshipping of them, even in our imagination; as if when One is named, we were not praying unto, and worshipping both the other; and as if the Son were an other God than the Father or Spirit, &c. But still this would be remembered, that whatever Person be named, He is God, and that same One God with the other Two: and therefore the Object of Worship, is ever the same One God, Father, Son, and Spirit, that are but One God. We Worship the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Spirit*; but we do not Worship the *Father*, or the *Son*, or the *Spirit*, as if He who is not named, were less worshipped than He who is named: and seeing the Son and holy Ghost, are the same God with the Father (the former ground being laid) it's all one thing whatever Person be named, though in Scripture sometimes respect is had to their order of subsisting and operating; and so the Father is onely named sometimes to be the ground upon, and by which, we have access to God; and so, the Son, onely is named.

Now, by what is said, it doth also appear that the holy Ghost may be expressly prayed unto, as the Father, and the Son, although it be not so usual in Scripture, because of the reasons formerly hinted at: for, this will follow, He that is God, may be invoked, &c. and where petitions do especially respect the increase of Grace, which is the Work of the Spirit, we will find Him expressly mentioned with the Father and Son, as here, *ver.* 4. and 5. *Grace be unto you, &c.* And, 2 *Cor.* 13. 14. *The communion of the holy Ghost*, is subjoyned, as a distinct petition, to the Love of the Father, and Grace of the Son; and these first two petitions, being directed to the Father and the Son, this third must be to the holy Ghost in like manner: and therefore to plead against the Godhead of the holy Ghost, upon this ground that he is not expressly prayed unto in Scripture, is both inconsequent, and false; and the Apostles taking the *holy Ghost* to be his witness, *Rom.* 9. cannot be done without invoking of Him: and the general commands of glorifying God, must infer so much, supposing the Spirit to be God.



God. There is no weight therefore to be laid on that argument.

If it be objected, against the necessity of believing this Doctrine of the Trinity, or, against the similitude of tolerating what opposeth the same, That the light of nature doth not discover it; and that the Godhead of the holy Ghost hath sometimes not so much as been heard of by Disciples, as in *Act. 19*. Therefore, &c.

To the first, we answer, That now nature being corrupted, it can be no good rule to try what is truth concerning God by it; it can hardly be denied, if nature be considered as in *Adam* at the beginning, but to him there was clearness in this mystery, there being express mention of the blessed Trinity in his creation, as the word, *Let us make man according to Our Image*, doth import: which is not for nought mentioned then, more than formerly, especially, considering that excellent knowledge that *Adam* was furnished with, which was a part of the Image of that One God, who is Father, Son, and Spirit. But, not to insist in this, we say, secondly; That if by nature, as it is now corrupted, what is tolerable or intolerable in the matters of Religion were to be tried, then were the whole Doctrine of the Gospel and Redemption through the Mediator, to be accounted no fundamental thing; and consequently, no Error, destroying it, were to be restrained, because nature hath not discovered that. That therefore must be an unsafe rule to walk by. And indeed if a master of a family and father, who yet, as such, is (to say so) a servant of nature, is not by that exempted from the obligation of bringing up his children and servants in the knowledge of God according to the Gospel; but is notwithstanding to exercise his authority in the restraining of every thing contrary thereunto according to his station. Can it be thought, that a Magistrate, who must count for his Authority over a people, as a master must do for his, over a family, is less obliged thereunto? For, Christians are to be Christians in their stations, as in their personal carriage; and so to seek the promoting of the Gospel, and the restraining of what may mar it according to their station. Thirdly, That even this may be drawn from the Moral Law of God; wherein not only the true God is alone to be worshipped, as in the first Command; but also accordingly as he hath prescribed and revealed in His Word, which is the sum of the second Command. Now, this being true, that the Lord hath thus revealed himself to be worshipped according to the Gospel, it becomes no less necessary to Worship God in that manner, than to Worship Him, who is the true God; and so, if by the first Command, and according to the light of nature, Magistrates should restrain, and not suffer what is inconsistent with the worshipping of the One true and living God, so is he, by the second Command and that same light of nature, obliged to restrain all manner of Doctrine and Worship, that is inconsistent with what he hath revealed, according to the second.

To the last part of the objection, from that instance, *Act. 19*. We say, first, That suppose there had been great ignorance then of the Godhead of the holy Ghost, while that mystery of the glorious Trinity was more obscurely revealed; yet, it will not follow, that it is equally excusable and sufferable now, when it is so plainly discovered: yea, can it be said, that they had been excusable, if, after *Paul's* teaching of them the true nature of Baptism and of the holy Ghost, they had continued not to believe the same, as they were before he did it; or, that we can be so now, having his lesson to them for our instruction? Yet, secondly, It seemeth that the Person of the holy Ghost, is not intended there, but the gifts of the holy Ghost, which often get that name in the New Testament: for, the *holy Ghost*, which is to be understood in that place, is such as was communicated to Believers, and such as these afterward did receive, as from *1 Pet. 2*. and *6*. is clear. Now there is great odds betwixt the

necessity of distinctness in the knowledge of these gifts, and of the holy Ghost Himself, who is not, nor cannot be communicated by the laying on of hands, except in respect of His gifts: this place therefore, doth not meet the conclusion formerly laid down, which was in reference to the Faith of the holy Ghost Himself, and not to the knowledge of His gifts.

These generals being granted, there do arise, from this practice of *John's*, several Questions, concerning the Object of Divine Worship: which, upon this occasion, (it may be) were not unworthy to be more particularly considered, so far as the nature of the place calleth for, and doth become our scope. As first, we see in this Prayer, *John* doth distinctly name all the Three blessed Persons, for their instruction and consolation to whom he sends this message. Secondly, When he names the Son, he doth name Him by such Titles as agree to Him only as Mediator; yea, and in this long, *ver. 6*. doth respect that, particularly, which is only applicable to Him as Man and as Mediator, to make them welcome it the more heartily, and thereby also the more to commend Him to them, and engage them to Him, by remembering them what He is, and what He hath done, that doth thus salute them. Thirdly, He hath a peculiar thanksgiving unto the Son, considered under such designations, as express His wonderful love that appears in His sufferings, which cannot be applied to the Father or Spirit: which is indeed Divine Worship, being the same which is here given to the Father, and Spirit. All which giveth occasion to enquire in these four. 1. Concerning the Object of Divine Worship, in general. 2. In what respect it is to be given to the Mediator. 3. In what form, Petitions may be directed to Him; or, if in any peculiar form. 4. Why the Mediator Christ, is so much, and so warmly, under these considerations of His incarnation and sufferings, insisted upon in the New Testament; and what may encourage and help in the improving of those grounds. These things being depths, are rather to be admired and believed in, in the general, (so far as we see clear in this precedent) than curiously to be pried into; yet, that they go not altogether without answer, we shall lay down some generals in reference to all these, which will yield some practical and comfortable conclusions. To the first, we say,

1. God is the alone Object of Divine Worship; and there is no Object thereof but God: because there is none who hath these infinite Attributes and Excellencies, which are requisite in the Object of Divine Worship, but God, such as Omniscience, Omnipotency, Infinity, Supreme Majesty, Glory, &c. from which (to speak so) results Adorability, an essential Attribute of the Majesty of God, as Immutability and Eternity are; He being adorable, because Infinite, Immense, Omniscient, &c. And therefore it cannot be communicate to any other, more than these incommunicable properties can be; and yet none can be worshipped who is not (so to speak) adorable.

2. There is but one kind of Divine Worship, to wit, that which is Supreme, and becoming this infinite Majesty of God: and, in a word, that which is required in the first Table of the Law, as that which is competent to this glorious excellent God: and this follows on the former: for, if there be but one Object, there can be but one manner of Worship. Therefore, in Scripture, to Worship God, is always opposed to the worshipping of any other, and to the admitting of any Worship, which is not competent to God, as *Revel. 19. 9. 10.* and *22. 9.*

3. Although there be Three Persons of the glorious Godhead, and all are to be worshipped; yet, there are not three Objects of Worship, but one; nor three kinds of Worship: Nor three Objects, because these Three Persons are the same One infinite God, who is the Object of Worship. For, first, Though the Three Persons, be really distinct each from other; yet, none of them is really distinct from the essence of the Godhead:

head : Therefore , the Father , is that same Object of Worship with the Son , because that same God . And secondly , Though the Father be infinite , and the Son infinite , &c . yet , there are not two infinitenesses , but the same infiniteness and immenseness , that which is the Father is the Son also ; because these are essential properties , and so common to all the Persons : and therefore , though their personal properties be distinct ; yet , their essential Attributes being common , they are not distinct Objects , but the same one Object ; seeing , still , in Worship , respect must be had to their essential Attributes ; and so to the Godhead , which is common to All : and therefore consequently to them , as They are one Object , it being the Deity ( which is One ) that is the formal Object of Worship : And , though sometimes these Three Persons be named together , as here : yet , that is not to propose them as distinct Objects , but to shew , who this one Object God is , to wit , the Father , Son and Spirit , Three Persons of the same One indivisible Godhead . Hence , the unity of the Godhead , is inculcated , for this end ; *The Lord thy God , O Israel , is One Lord .*

From which it followeth , 1. That the mind of the worshipper is not to be distracted in seeking to comprehend , or order , in his thoughts , Three distinct Persons , as distinct Objects of Worship ; but , to conceive reverently of One infinite God , who is Three Persons . 2. That whatever Person be named , he is not to think that the other is less worshipped ; but that in one act he worships that One God , and so the Father , Son and Spirit . 3. That by naming One Person after he hath named an other , ( suppose he name the Father at first , and afterward the Son ) he doth not vary the Object of Worship , as if he were praying to an other than formerly ; but that still it is the same One God . 4. Because our imagination is ready to foster such divided conceptions , we conceive it is safest not to alter the denomination of the Persons in the same Prayer , especially , where it is in the hearing of others , who possibly may have such thoughts , though we have none : and I suppose , this way is most ordinarily taken in Scripture .

For answering to the second , to wit , how the Mediator is the Object of Divine Worship : we shall first distinguish this title *Object* , then answer . By Divines , there is in this case a threefold Object acknowledged ( all agreeing to the Mediator in some respect . ) 1. There is *Objectum materiale* , or , *quod* , that is , the Object , or Person to whom Worship is given . 2. There is *Objectum formale* , or , *quo* , that is , the account upon which it is given to that Person , or Object . 3. There is *Objectum considerationis* , that is , the consideration that the worshipper hath of that Object in worshipping of Him ; and is as a motive thereto , or is ( as the learned *Vortius* calls it , *specificatio Objecti* ) the Specification of the Object , whereby the heart of the worshipper , by taking up the Object worshipped under such a consideration , is warmed with love and thankfulness , and strengthened in his confidence , to Worship that Object . Thus , the relations that God took on Him to be the Redeemer of His people from Egypt , and from the land of the North , did give no new Object of Worship ; yet , did they give some external denominations , or Specifications , of that Object God to them : the consideration whereof , in their worshipping , did much qualify the Object to them , so that with the more thankfulness and confidence , they might approach to him : and thus we distinguish between the Object worshipped , and the consideration which may be had of Him in our Worship . And this doth not make Him adorable simply and in Himself , because He was so naturally ; but , it is the ground upon which He is accessible to us , who are sinners and enemies : from which , we may lay down a threefold distinction . 1. Betwixt the material and formal Object of Worship . 2. Betwixt the Object of the act of Worship , and of our consideration in worshipping . 3. Betwixt that which is the ground of Worship , suppose Prayer , Faith

simply considered in it self , and that which is the ground of our access considered in our selves , to pray unto , or believe in , that Object .

To answer then the Question , we say , 1. That the Mediator is the Object of Divine Worship , is fixedly to be acknowledged ; even the Man Christ , is to be honoured with Divine Worship , prayed unto , &c . as in Scripture is clear : Thus the Mediator is the material Object of Divine Worship , or , the *Objectum quod* : for , we worship and invoke Him who is the Mediator ; and there is no question of this .

2. Christ , considered as Mediator , and in the virtue of His mediation , is the only ground , upon which we have right to expect to be accepted in any part of our worship : or , to have prayers granted , which we put up to God under what ever designation or title : for , so He is the Door and the way , *Joh. 10. 9.* and *14. 6.* and in this respect though He be not as such , the formal Object of Divine Worship ; yet , He is the foundation whereupon it is now built ; the way , by which it must be addressed to God ; and He is the High Priest , *Heb. 7. 25.* This was typified by the Temple , Ark , and High Priest under the Law : for , sinners have not access to God , but by Him ; and this strengthens Faith to approach , that God is manifested in our nature , and that so we have , by His suffering , entry through the Vail , to the Throne of Grace , which formerly , without respect to this , was shut .

3. Our Lord Jesus , who is God , in our worshipping of Him , may be considered as Mediator ; and , upon that ground , the heart may be emboldened to approach unto God : because He that is God , is also Man and Mediator . Thus , we praise and pray to Him that died , and considering Him as once dead , in our uptaking of Him , yet so , as it is , because He is God : for , had it been possible that the Mediator could not have been God , there had not been ground for giving of this Worship unto Him ; yet , this consideration warms the heart with love to Him , and gives confidence and cheerfulness in praying to Him , or praising of Him , as in this same place , and afterward , *cap. 5.* because seeing we have a Man to do with , who hath so experimentally felt sinless infirmities , of purpose to be the ground of a sympathy with His Members ; and seeing He hath still humane affections , by having a glorified body still united in One Person with His Divine Nature , which wants not humane feeling , though in an inconceivable manner ; and seeing also , that that is given in the Word , as an encouragement for us , to step forward , to expect grace and help in the time of need , *Heb. 2. 18.* and *4. 15, 16.* and that even from Him : there is no question but , by the actual considering of this , a soul may , and ought to strengthen it self in its approaching unto God .

4. Yet , this Divine Worship is given to Him , as He is God , and because He is God ; and so Christ-God is the *Objectum formale* , or , *quo* of this Divine Worship , because it is the Godhead that is the alone formal Object of Divine Worship , as is said ; and Christ only , as God , hath these essential Attributes of *Omniscience* , *Supream Majestie* , *Adorabilitie* , &c . which are requisite for the Object of Divine Worship . And therefore in this place , although He be set out in what is peculiar to Him as Mediator ; yet , His being reckoned with the other Two blessed Persons , doth prove that notwithstanding thereof He is considered in His Person as God . It is then thus , as we say , Christ-God died , yet as Man ; so the Man Christ , is worshipped , yet as God : for , though He be one Person , yet the properties of the two Natures are distinct . Hence , as the *Fathers* did prove Christ's Godhead against the *Arrians* , from this , that He was worshipped with Divine Worship ; and account them Idolaters for worshipping Him thus , whom they did not esteem to be God ; so do the latter Divines in reference to the *Socinians* .

5. Therefore this Worship that is given to Christ the Mediator , is of the same kind that is given to God , to wit , *Supream* , *Divine*



**Divine Worship:** for; there are not two sorts of Divine Worship. And to give the Mediator, who is God, an inferior kind of Worship, would, 1. wrong Him who is God: for, by talking to Himself that external relation, He hath not diminished His essential Glory and Majesty. 2. It supposes two objects of Worship, and two kinds of Divine Worship: which is false. Therefore Divines have ever censured that assertion. In the *Remonstrants* Confession, anent giving a peculiar and middle-kind of Worship to Christ the Mediator, as of it self unsafe and as making way for the *Socinians* subterfuge, which is to allow a Worship to the Mediator, as Mediator, inferior to that which is given to God; and so, that it should not follow from this, that *Christ is worshipped*. Therefore, *He is God equal with the Father*. Now, the Scripture giveth Him that same Worship, and not any other, even when it is denied to all creatures; yea, when He is worshipped in the dayes of His flesh. He is considered as the *only begotten of the Father*, as *Lord and Almighty*, having all creatures as servants under Him, &c. and yet He is styled the *Son of David*, *He that was to come*, &c. even at that time; to shew, that both considerations have place in worshipping of the same Person, who is God, and also Mediator; and not to bring in a new Worship; for, none can be more glorious, than what is due to God; but to lay a new ground of having access to give Him the Worship which is due, and by a new relation to give a kindly qualification of the Object, whereby the heart may be provoked lovingly and thankfully to give the same.

6. When this Worship is given to Him, it is given to the Person who is Mediator, and that in one individual act: for, He, as God, is not worshipped one way; and, as man another way; nor is there, a division of His Natures to be conceived; but the Person, who is Man, is worshipped with this Divine Honour in the same act, because He is God: therefore there is no such precision called for in the intent of the Worshipper, as if one Nature of Christ were to be worshipped and not the other: for, it's the Person, who is worshipped, now consisting of two Natures.

7. When the Mediator is thus worshipped, there is no distinct Object of Divine Worship worshipped: but as whatever Person be named, it's the same God; so, however the Mediator be named, or considered, it's the same Person: for, though the second Person of the Godhead, considered in Himself, be not *unum*, or, the same thing with the Mediator, (*sensu sci-formali*, as Divines say) yet is He *unus*, the same Person; and the second Person of the Godhead, being *unum*, to wit, the same God with the other two glorious Persons essentially considered, although He be not *unus* with the Father and Spirit, considered personally: for, the Godhead, essentially taken, is the same thing with the Father, Son and Spirit, as hath been said. Then it will follow, that even when the Mediator is worshipped, there is but still the same one formal Object of Divine Worship, to wit, God; they being still the same essential properties, which alone give ground for a creature to Worship all the Persons of the glorious Trinity, considered in themselves; or, the Son, considered as Mediator, in the manner expressed. Again it appears thus, the Son who is Mediator, is the same Object of Worship, that the Son the second Person of the Godhead is: for, now He being One Person, cannot be conceived as two distinct Objects of Worship; but the Son, as the second Person of the Godhead, is the same Object of Worship with the Father and Spirit, as hath been said. Therefore the Son, who is Mediator, when worshipped with Divine Honour, is the same formal Object of Divine Worship also. And this also doth confirm, that Divine Worship is given to Him as God; for, so only is He the same Object with the Father and Spirit.

8. When the Son is worshipped, there is no lesse respect to be had to His Mediation, than when the Father is expressed; so

that who ever be named, the Son still, as Mediator, is to be made use of, and that in the same manner: for, as there is but One God, so there is but One Mediator betwixt God and man, 1 Tim. 2. 3. without whom there is no access for a sinner to approach unto, or worship acceptably, this One God. Thus, God is the formal Object of Worship; the Mediator, considered as such, is the ground upon which with confidence we may approach to that God: therefore is He the *way*, and *Truth and Life*; there is no going to God but by Him, so that in our Worship, God and the Mediator are not to be separated; yet are they not to be confounded: for we Worship God, in and by the Mediator: in which respect, the Mediator is called the *Door*, *Altar*, *way*, &c. because it is by the virtue and efficacy of His Mediation that the sinful distance betwixt God and us is removed, and access made for sinners to Worship Him, as was typified by the *Temple*, and *Tabernacle*, in which the *Mercy seat* was placed; and in looking to which, the people were to worship God.

From all which, it will follow, in reference to the third. First, That our Prayers may be directed to Jesus the Mediator expressly, as *Act*. 7. 59. Secondly, That He may be named by Titles, agreeing only to Him as Mediator, to wit, *Mediator*, *Jesus*, *Thou who died*, *Advocate*, &c. because these, being given Him, in concreto, design the Person. Thirdly, That the heart may be in the instant stirred and affected with this, that He is Mediator, so as to specify Him, or, to make Him the Object of our consideration as such, in that act, as hath been said. Thus a soul may pray to Jesus, who died, who made satisfaction, who interceeds, &c. and, upon that consideration, be affected with love, strengthened in hope and confidence in its Prayer, which yet is put up to Him, because He is God. Fourthly, We may ask from Him what peculiarly belongs to the Office of Mediation; as, that He may guide His Church, pour out the Spirit, gift Ministers, interceed, &c. because the Person to whom these belong, is God. And that extrinseck relation, or denomination, of being Mediator, doth not marr us to pray to Him; as his being God, hinders not but that He still executes that office by performing of such acts: but both give ground, that confidently we may pray to Him, for these things; yet, in that, still His Godhead is the formal Object of our Prayer, though the things we pray for, belong to His Mediation: for, we could not seek these from Him, were He not God; and because He is God and Man, we are emboldened to seek them and to expect them. See *Psal*. 45. 3, 4. &c. for, the matter sought, to wit, *riding prosperously*, &c. belongeth to His Mediation, as the scope, clears; yet, the account upon which, is, that He was *God most mighty*. For (as they say) it is not *Mediatio*, but *Deitas*, that is the *ratio formalis* of Divine Worship; or, His Mediation, as it includes His Deity, by the wise Grace of God these two being now inseparably joyned together: for, certainly, Christ the Mediator, was to be made use of with respect to His future satisfaction, before He actually became Man; as it is since to be done, with respect to His incarnation and suffering (for He was Mediator and stood in that relation before He was Man) yet, it cannot be said, that He was then, as such, considered as the formal Object of their Worship (even when they did explicitly consider Him with respect to His Mediation) because He did not then actually exist in two Natures: and therefore, behoved to be the formal Object of Worship, in respect of that Nature, which alone did then exist. Fifthly, As any of the Persons may be named in Prayer; so, for strengthening of our Faith, may the Mediator be named and prayed unto under such titles and relations as agree only to him, and not to any other Person; Yet, then we would beware, 1. Of conceiving that we are praying to a different Object, or that the Mediator is lesse glorious, just, holy, &c. unto whom we pray, than when God is expressly named. We would also beware of conceiving that by so doing, Christ is any way more engaged to, or employed by

by, any, than when any other Person of the Godhead is named; or, when other expressions are used, though we our selves may be more strengthened by such considerations. 2. When there is an alteration of the expression, we would beware of conceiving that we alter the Object; but, would mind that it is the continued worshipping of the same Object G O D, however he be designed: or, what ever be the expressions or different helps, which we seek to strengthen our Faith by. 3. We conceive, that in publick, especially, that change should be warily used, lest it breed, or be apt to breed any such thoughts in others, the generality of people, being prone to imagine different Objects of Worship in such cases.

From what is said, we conceive, that the different expressions among Divines in this matter, may be easily agreed; for example, some call Him, as Mediator, *Objectum materiale*; as God, *Objectum formale*: some say, as Mediator, He is *Objectum quod*; and, as God, *Objectum quo*: some say, *Persona*, *seu is, qui est Deus, est invocandus, quia Mediator, sed quia Deus*: some again say, *Christus quia Mediator, est invocandus, sed quia Deus*: for when some say, *qua Mediator*, He is not the Object of worship, they understand the formal Object; which is that, that is understood by others, when they say, *quia Deus*. Again when others say, *qua Mediator*, He is to be worshipped, they understand it as He is the Object of consideration: which is expressed by others, when they say, *quia Mediator, Christus Deus est invocandus*; or, as such, He is *Objectum materiale* of our Worship.

It may then be asked, what may be thought of such a form of Prayer, *O Mediator*, or, *O Advocate*, *plead for me*, which some may be apt to put up as being comfortable to them? We answer, in these five Assertions.

*Affert. 1.* It cannot be simply condemned if well understood with these and such like qualifications, that is, 1. If the Mediator prayed unto, or He who is to plead or interceed, be not conceived to be any different Object of Worship, from God, with whom He interceeds; otherwise there is no keeping of the unity of the Object of Divine Worship; much lesse is He to be prayed unto as if He were inferior to God, as easier to be dealt with, or, as if He might be spoken unto, when yet we are not praying unto the Father, and worshipping Him, in that same act: for, as Christ-God, reconciled us to Himself, by His own satisfaction; so, is Himself prevailed with, to make the benefits purchased, forth coming to us by the vertue of His own intercession; and the Person is the same, though the consideration of Him in these, is diverse. 2. If there be a right up-taking of His intercession, that in the time while He, as God, is prayed unto, Faith be exercised on the vertue of His intercession, for attaining what is prayed for; so, that expression is but made use of for strengthening, of Faith, without any new, or different act of Faith, but such as is used with other expressions. 3. If the Object prayed unto, be distinguished from the sure or matter prayed for: for so, it is as if we prayed unto Him that is King of His Church, and hath received the government, to manage the same for His Churches behoof: because, though the thing sought, to wit, Christs intercession, be peculiar to the second Person of the Godhead, and that as Mediator; yet, He from whom it is sought, is God; and so the Object is the same. 4. It must be one in the matter, as if in different expressions by naming the Father, we should pray, *O Father, make me partaker of the benefits of Christs intercession*: for, if it be thought that that expression cometh more nearly to the improving of Christs intercession, (or, so to say) to the employing of Him, than any other expression doth. Then it is not to be admitted: because it placeth the improving of His intercession, rather in words, than in faith.

*Affert. 2.* We grant, that sometimes, *de facto*, it may be used in sincerity, and accepted by God; when there is much confusion in reference to these qualifications in the Person: be-

cause it may have what is essential, to wit, an adoring of God, and an exercise of Faith in Christ, under that expression; so that their meaning is, to obtain what they seek from God, through the vertue of Christs intercession, though themselves be unworthy. Thus, no question, many Prayers of the Saints, where Faith hath been in the Mediator, have been accepted, although there hath been much indistinctness, as to the Object, in many things: such were *Cornelius* his Prayers, *Acts* 10. And the Apostles, no question, prayed and were accepted; yet, had defect here, *Joh. 16. 24*.

*Affert. 3.* Again, we answer, That such a form is not necessary simply to the use-making of His intercession, either as if that were limited to this expression, or, as if it were a way more proper, compendious, weighty, or acceptable, in the use-making of Christ, than another; even though all these qualifications concur: for, no question, in the Prayers that are registrated in the Scripture, Christs intercession is made use of; yet no such form is recorded therein.

*Affert. 4.* We say further, that it may be abused; and, we are afraid, often is; and that it hath some aptnesse to foster mistakes concerning the Object of Worship, or our act in it, as, 1. That the Mediator is one Object, and the Father an other, as if we might pray to the Mediator before we pray to God, and not be in that same act worshipping the Father; or, as if the Mediator that interceeds, were an Object different from God, with whom He is to interceed. If it be said, that He is an other thing than God. *Ans.* Formally considered, (as is said) He is another thing than the second Person of the Godhead; but He is not any other Person, nor any other God; and so not an other Object of Worship. 2. It tendeth to propose Christ as more easie to be dealt with than God; and God, (to wit, the Father) as more rigide, and severe than the Mediator, whereas the divine Attributes are the same in both: for, if Christ-God be considered without respect to His own Mediation, there is no access to Him more than to the Father: and if respect be had thereto, there is equal access to the Father, there being the same Covenant and Promises. And it is certain, some will think they may pray to Christ, when they dare not pray to the Father. 3. It obscures the way of the use-making of Christs intercession, which is a most sublime thing; and being the same with praying in His Name, and in Faith, must be conceived to be done Spiritually by Faith, whereas thus Christ is represented as a Mediator amongst men; to whom first adresse is made, and then by Him to the Principal Party; and so it constitutes two addressees, which brangles the unity of the Object of Worship. 4. It some way lessens the Glory of the Mediator, at least in appearance, as if He, even the Person, were not Supream, but had an other to plead with. It is true, it is so, as He is Mediator; but still it would be adverted that He is also God; and so He may, and can confer what His Mediation procures: and expressions in Prayer, would besit that, and would not be as if He were not God as to His Person, since His Incarnation? 5. It seemeth, if not to represent two Objects of Worship, yet two kinds of Worship, to wit, one to the Mediator, or to Christ, as Mediator; and an other as to God: for, who readily will think, that He who is a distinct Party, intreated to plead, is to be equally honoured, and that in the same act with Him with whom He pleads, or at least, a twofold manner of the same Worship, *viz.* one in this manner, and an other, when this form is not used. 6. It is hard thus to conceive rightly of Christs Person: for, when we pray to Him, we must consider Him as God, at least that must be implied: then, He is also to be interceeded with by His own Mediation, as the Father is, which, I suppose, few intend. If they take the Father Personally, and so that Christ is to interceed with the Father as a distinct Person, or a distinct Party, and so not with the Son and Spirit also, That will insinuate that the Father is not the same God.



God with the Son, and infer a divided conception of the most simple essence of the Godhead, which is the *One* Object of Worship.

*Answer.* 3. Therefore, When all is considered, although we will not condemn it simply, yet we think it more fit to abstain from such formal expressions; or, at least, to be sparing therein, especially in publick: because, 1. So it is difficult to preserve that unity in the one Object of Worship, which should be; for, it is not easie to redd things in practice, as distinctions may be given in doctrinal debates and conclusions: and should souls hazard on what may confuse themselves. I say, especially in publick, or with others: because, if it be difficult to keep our own imaginations stayed in such expressions, it will be more difficult to redd other mens imaginations, considering what ignorance and vanity usually doth accompany many. 2. There is no such form in Scripture, even in the New Testament, when the Mediator is prayed unto; and it is safest we should follow these that have gone before us: He is indeed prayed unto, considered as Mediator, but still so as the thing prayed for, is expected from Himself, as well as to be obtained by Him.

To close then as we began; here sobriety is called for, and curiosity is to be shunned: and in Worship the heart is rather to be occupied with Godly fear, reverence and dread, than the head to be filled with imaginations.

Having these following things fixed in our hearts by Faith (which we conceive more simply necessary to Worship, what ever the expression be,) to wit. 1. An impression of the Holiness, Justice, Omniscience, and Glory of God, &c. and suitable affections with the present work, to wit, such as the worshipping of such a God doth call for. 2. A conviction that we are praying to that One glorious God, what ever our expressions be; that it is He we are worshipping, that it is our design to adore Him, and that it is from Him that we expect what we pray for, what ever the designation in the petition be, and whatsoever Person be named. 3. An impression of our own sinful disproportionableness to that work, and of the utter incapacity that we stand in of having access to God, or any ground of expecting any thing from Him, in respect of our selves; if it be not obtained by virtue of Christ Jesus His satisfaction and intercession. 4. An exercising of Faith on Christ the Mediator, for attaining of what is prayed for, from God, by virtue of the Mediation of the Mediator. All which are necessary, and where they are, we conceive, the soul is to silence all other questionings, and to hold here; and when doubtings arise, to put these two Queries to a point within it self. 1. To whom art thou praying? Or, was thou praying? Or, from whom expectest thou what thou was seeking? Was it not to, and from God? And, 2. For whose cause, and by virtue of what, dost thou expect it from God? What gives thee confidence to put that late to Him? Is it not only through the Mediation of Christ Jesus alone? And where these two are fixedly answered by the conscience, when temptation would jumble, because of indistinctness in Prayer, there may be quietness notwithstanding: because, these two are the essentials of Worship, to wit, First, That God be approached unto and adored, Next, That in and by the Mediator, address be made unto Him, and this may be where there is no such explicate expression of either; for, where God is mentioned, the Mediator is implied as the ground upon which we approach unto Him; and when the Mediator is expressed, it is understood, that God in and by Him is worshipped; and that no other God but He who is the Father, Son, and Spirit. And if all these a conscience were posed, that, may be, had no such explicate thoughts (nor is it possible in worshipping actually, to entertain them distinctly) it would answer, that so intended and meant, from one question to another, till it resoly to this, to wit, that he were praying to the One God, through the virtue

of the Mediator Christ Jesus, which is the scope and thus much anxiety may be prevented.

As to the fourth Question formerly mentioned, to wit, What may be the reasons why Christ is so much insisted on in particular, in the Saints approaching to God, so as the heart is especially rejoyced at the mentioning of Him? or, what may help to improve that ground of access which we have by Him? *Answer.* To the first part: It is no marvel that this relation that Christ doth stand in, be much insisted on, in such a case; and, that thereby the heart be warmed, and made to exult.

First, Because, by that consideration, there is some staying of us in approaching to God: for, the Godhead considered in it self, is an infinit, Inconceivable thing: and as there is no proportion betwixt Him and us; so not betwixt Him and our capacities of reaching Him so considered, but by this union of the Godhead with our nature in the Person of the Son; so that He who is Man, is also God, *Having the sameness of the Godhead dwelling in Him bodily*, Coloss. 2. 9. There is a condescendence upon the Almighty side, shewing Himself accessible to sinners, and as appointing this (to say so) for a trying place with them, to wit, that, *He is in Christ reconciling the world to Himself*, 2 Cor. 5. 19. whereupon the heart fixeth, there to meet God, and find Him there; and is thereby imboldened and helped to try with the great and dreadful God. This was typified by the Lords placing of the Mercy-seat above the Ark, by the giving of His answers from thence, and appointing the people with respect thereto to make their addresses to Him; whence we see, *looking toward the Temple*, Jonah 2. 4. *toward the holy Hill*, and *holy Oracle*, &c. frequently mentioned in the Saints straits; which were typical of this true Tabernacle, which God pitched and not man; and also held out there fixing in their Worship, where God had by His Ordinance tryed them, though it was but in Type. And, seeing they made so much of it, what wonder is it that the Saints, since Christs incarnation and suffering, make so great account of the Substance and Antitype it self?

Secondly, A second reason, is, Because in Christ Jesus the glory and riches of the Grace of God, in the work of Redemption, doth most eminently and palpably appear: which is both sweetest to the Saints, to insist on, and also rendeth to the advancement of the glory of God, dwelling in Him, and so furnishing Him for them. And therefore, these commendations that are given expressly to Christ the Mediator, and whereby Faith is strengthened in Him, do also set forth and commend exceedingly the Majesty of God, and His Grace condescending thus to men; and, in the same act, do serve to strengthen Faith in Him: for, honouring of God, and the Mediator; and also the speaking to the praise of God, and to the commendation of the Mediator, cannot be separated; and what strengthens Faith in the one, doth it also in the other.

Thirdly, A third is, Because there is most sensible footing and (to speak so) gripping to be gotten by looking to the Mediator, and mentioning of Him: for, He being God and also Man, there is more access to conceive what the affections and bowels that He as Man hath, and for this end hath taken up to Glory with Him, that sinners thereby might have confidence in approaching to, and by, an experienced high Priest, Heb. 2. 18. and 4. 16. than can be had to consider God abstractly in Himself: of whose divine Attributes, there can be no such apprehension. And this is not to give a new Object of our Faith, as if thereby it were sure, (for nothing can be added to the fullness of God) but, is to make that Object (to say so) more discernable, conceivable, suitable and accessible unto us; and to give us a new ground to strengthen our Faith, and a new way of having our necessities made sensible (to say so) to Him, that is, when not only by His Omniscience, He knows them fully, as God, but also being acquainted thereby with the same; In



respect of His humane affections, He is, in an inconceivable manner, by sympathie affected therewith: which though it adde not to the height or degree of His love and pity; yet, doth it bring it to such a channel (to say so) that hearts are more able to conceive thereof, and are more delighted and comforted therein. And therefore it is no marvel, that the same be most frequently mentioned.

Fourthly, He is (as is frequently said) the ground upon which we have access: for, sin made a gulf betwixt God and man; man could not step over the same to God, but God stepped over, and hath come to mans side by being manifested in our nature, in the Person of the Son, that so He might give men access again to Him. Hence Christ is, in going to God, the *Door*, and *Way*; and, as it were, the bridge by which they passe, and that safely unto their former communion with God: and therefore Christ being God, so that they cannot have Him but they must have God; and, being also the *Way*, by which access is given them to God; it is no marvel that the mentioning of Him be sweet.

Fifthly, The great effects of the love of God have kythed, and have been brought about in the Person of the Son, the Mediator: and, though there be no greater love, as to its extent, degree, or freeness in the Son, than in the Father and Spirit, (as is said) nor can be; yet, that maketh the Mediator more obviously lovely to the sinner, although indeed, in the same things, the love of the other two Persons doth appear also. And, seeing this maketh the Object of our love more sensible to us; and helpeth us to understand Gods love the better, which otherwise is inconceivable: therefore, God by proposing this as the pattern and evidence of His love, and as the Object of ours, doth even allow sinners to feed their love, and strengthen their faith on this Object, and on the immediate and explicate thoughts thereof, which yet is the delighting and feeding on the love of God so manifested, which cannot be so well read and understood, as by direct looking upon it, as it is manifested in the Mediator, who, being God, became Man, suffered; died; and is now, though glorified, yet a true Man, touched in a humane manner with our infirmities, as a mother, or friend are touched with the difficulties of a child, or one intirely beloved, though still in a manner becoming His sinlesse, glorified, and most perfect state. This is a main attractive, to make souls look to God by this open *Door*; and also by expressing this, which is nearest to their own comfort, and conception to expresse their Faith in God, or their love to Him.

For encouraging and clearing of us in the Improving of these grounds, these things would be remembered.

1. That our blessed Lord is true Man, having these affections and properties that are natural and not sinful, truly, and really: and that therefore, there is a greater nearness conceivable in our approaching to Him, than to God simply considered in Himself.

2. That, as He is Man, having such properties; so He is affected suitably thereunto, that is, He hath a humane affection to, and sympathie with these He loveth; and hath the experimental remembrance of His by-past sufferings, which also hath its own affecting influence on His soul, for a waking of such pity as is consistent with His inconceivable glorified state.

3. That He who is Man, and thus affected, is also God; and

so by His *Omniscience*, acquainted with every need and strait of His people; and with every petition of theirs, whereby His former affections are stirred, (to say so) and His sympathie awakened, to make His divine Attributes forth-coming for their good.

4. It would be considered, that the Scripture allows these considerations of Christ to Believers, for helping them up to communion with Him, and so with God in Him; and for strengthening them to approach to Him with confidence on that ground.

5. As there is an exercising of Faith in God; and thereby, a keeping of communion with Him; so there is a proportionable sympathizing, heart-warming, and bowel-moving affection allowed us, even towards the very Man Christ, as one hath to a dear friend, or most loving husband: that so, in a word, we may love Him, who is Man; as He, who is Man, loves us. And, this kind of communion, is peculiar to the Believer, with the second Person of the Godhead, as it is peculiar to the second Person of the Godhead, as Man, by humane affections, to love Him; And thus we are not only one Spirit with Him as with the other Persons of the Godhead, 1 Cor. 6. 17. but we are one *body* with Him; of *His flesh*, and of *His bone*, Eph. 5. 30. in respect of this union and communion that is betwixt a Believer and the Man Jesus Christ.

Hence, 6. As we have most access to conceive of Christs love to us, who is Man; so we are in the greater capacity to vent our love on Him, and to have our bowels kindled upon the consideration of His being Man, and performing what He did in our nature for us; so the Object is most suited, to be beloved by us, in His condescending to be as a Brother to us. And this doth confirm what is said, and is a reason also why Believers vent their love to God by flowing in its expressions directly concerning Christ: Because, He is both the more sensible Object of our Faith, and love; and also because there is more possibility to conceive and mention what He in our nature hath done; than to consider God, and His operations, in Himself abstractly.

7. Hearts would always remember that He is God, and so that they love, and keep communion with Him that is God: that makes the former the more wonderfully lovely; as this should make souls keep up the estimation and dignity that is due to such a Person; so condescending. And so by the Man Christ, both to love, and believe in God.

And in sum, having the excellencies of God dwelling in the Man Christ, whose affections they are more able to conceive of, whose sufferings have made His love palpable, in whom God hath condescended to deal with us; and on whom our affections and Faith also may have the more sensible footing by the consideration of His humane affections. There is no wonder that this way of adoring, praising, and loving of God, be so much insisted upon: and yet, even then when the heart is upon this consideration delighting and feeding itself upon the Mediator, still His Godhead is employed, and God in Him delighted in; without which, all other consolations would be defective. And so it is God; in the Mediator, who is the Object of this delight. Now, unto this One God; be praise in the Church, by Jesus Christ, for now and ever.

## LECTURE II.

Verf. 4. *John to the seven Churches in Asia, Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come, and from the seven Spirits which are before His Throne.*

5. And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithfull witnesse, and the first-begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the Kings of the earth: Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

6. And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

**W**E heard of the Persons from whom: follows now these to whom the Epistle is sent, to wit, the seven Churches in Asia; and they are particularly named, ver. 11. and are several times spoken of in the two Chapters following: Therefore, at the entry, we shall speak to a doubt or two concerning this Inscription to them.

Quest. 1. *Why is this Revelation, in form of an Epistle, sent to particular Churches, rather than to the whole Church?* 2. *And why is it sent particularly to the seven Churches in Asia?* 3. *Why are they stiled seven Churches, and not one Church.*

To the first of these: Though it be sent to particuar Churches; yet, this excludes none from the use of it to the end of the world: for, though many particular Epistles, as the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, &c. be directed to particular Churches; yet, the benefit of the Word contained in them extendeth to all Believers in all ages, as well as to them to whom they were directed: So, those particular Epistles, directed to the seven Churches in Asia, in the 2. and 3. chapters, are useful and behoveful to all the Churches of Christ in the like cases, as if they had been particularly directed to them: therefore is that Word cast to, in the close of each of those Epistles, *Let him that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches.* 2. As to the general subject matter of this Book. It concerns not these particular Churches, more than others, as we told at the entry. For, ver. 1. It is directed to his Servants, to be made use of to the end of the world, and it's sent to those particular Churches to be transmitted by them to other Churches; and in this sense, the Church is called the pillar and ground of Truth, 1 Tim. 3. 15: as holding forth and transmitting the Truth to others.

To the second, *why is it dedicated to the seven Churches in Asia?* *Ans.* 1. Either because these Churches were next to Patmos, where John was now banished: for, those who are skilled in Geography know, that this little Isle lyes off Asia the lesse. Or, 2. Because it's like John had particular inspection of those Churches in Asia committed to him: which though it be not particularly set down in Scripture; yet, it's clear from Scripture, that there was a division of inspection among the Apostles, without limiting any of them. Peter was sent to the Circumcision; Paul to the Gentiles; James abode at Jerusalem. And in the Ecclesiastick Story, it's asserted, that after Paul had planted Ephesus, John stayed there, who lived last of the Apostles: And so these Churches being (as would seem) under his special oversight, while he is absent from them by banishment, he commends this Epistle to them. 3. Jesus Christ sends it to them, partly, because of some special faults that were among them, their need so requiring; and because of some special tryals they were to endure, and the need they had of consolation under these trials: partly, because they were the most famous Churches then: for, Jerusalem was now destroyed, this being written in the dayes of Domitian the Emperour.

To the third, *why writes he to them as particular Churches, To the seven Churches in Asia, and not to the Church in Asia?* *Ans.* For clearing of this, the Scripture speaks of the Church in a threefold sense, 1. As comprehending the whole number of visible Professors, scattered through the world; so the Gospel Church is spoken of from the dayes of Christ to His coming

again, as 1 Cor. 12. 28. God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, &c. where, by Church, is not to be understood this or that particular Church, nor the Church in Corinth: for, the Church he is speaking of, is such a Church, as God had set the Apostles in, and all Officers; and that was in no particular Church, but is the universal Church, spoken of in the Verse before, made up both of Jews and Gentiles: and so the word is often used elsewhere, as it is said, *Paul made havock of the Church*, and that he persecuted the Church. It was not this or that particular Church, but all that called on the Name of Jesus Christ, to whatsoever particular Church they did belong. So, (1 Cor. 10. 32.) the Church is contradistinguished from Jews and Gentiles, *Give none offence to the Jews, nor Gentiles, nor to the Church of God*, that is, to the Church visible, professing Faith in Christ. And this Church, Revel. 12. is set out under the similitude of a woman in travel, in readiness to be delivered, and afterward doth flee; which is not this or that particular Church, but the Mother-Church, comprehending the whole visible number of Professors. 2. It is taken, as comprehending a number of Believers, meeting together in one place ordinarily for the Worship of God, the smallest associated part of this body of the universal visible Church, as 1 Cor. 14. 34. a company of professing Believers met, or meeting together for Preaching, or Prayer: and in this sense, the Scripture speaks not so often of the Church. 3. It's taken neither for the whole body of visible Professors, nor yet for such a part of that Body, that is, a company met or meeting together; but, for a number associated and combined under one Government, meeting in their Church-Guides and Officers, though under this combination and Government there be many Congregations and Meetings: and so the Church at Corinth, Ephesus, and Jerusalem, is to be understood: not for the Universal Catholick Church, nor for a particular Congregation; but for a number of particular Congregations under one Government, such as there was in Corinth and Ephesus. And yet, when he directs his Epistle to one Church, as under one Government, particular Congregations are included; as in Jerusalem, there were many Churches and many Watch-men, and they could not meet together in one place, for the exercise of Gods Worship; yet it was not unsuitable to say, the Church at Jerusalem, (as the Church at Glasgow) as under one Government, though it were not suitable to speak of them as of one Congregation met together: for, there were many moe Congregations of people in one of those Towns, as 1 Cor. 14. 34. compared with 1 Cor. 1. 3. there were Churches under one Church: therefore, it behoved to be a mutual combination, that made up one body. In answer to the Question therefore, While he speaks to them as Churches in Asia, it is because he looks on them as so many distinct incorporations, parts of the whole; or, because their cases and conditions were distinct; and one message could not agree to all, the case of Ephesus, was one; the case of Smyrna, another, &c. And severall cases and conditions, required severall letters.

But if any say, *It is improper to speak of a Church in the New Testament, except of a particular Congregation, because it's said here to the seven Churches in Asia, and elsewhere the Churches in Judea, &c.*

We answer: 1. That inference will not hold; but rather the contrary; for here, it's said, *the Church at Ephesus*; and in Ephesus.



*Ephesus* were many particular Congregations : therefore, it's meant of a Church associated and combined under one Government : neither ever are Churches in one place mentioned, of whatsoever number they be ; but as one. 2. Though *seven Churches of Asia* be spoken of here ; yet, *Revel. 12.* the Church is spoken of, under the similitude of one woman : and these Churches, must be parts of that one ; the seed of that woman, and children of that mother. See more, *chap. 11.* at the end.

Observe, That our Lord Jesus Christ taketh notice of the particular estate of His Churches : not only how it goeth with the Church, in general ; but how it goeth with this or that particular Church ; how it goeth with *Edinburgh, Glasgow, &c.* which shews a reason why he distinguisheth them in the inscription.

The second part of the inscription, is, a thanksgiving, from the midst of the 5. *vers.* to the 7. *vers.* when he hath wished *Grace and peace from Jesus Christ*, whom he calls *the first begotten from the dead* : because by virtue of Him, all do arise ; and because He was the first that rose and went to Heaven (for, though *Enoch* and *Elias* be personally in Heaven, they tasted not of death ; and so cannot be called *the first begotten from the dead* ; others died again, as *Lazarus*) And when he hath called Him *the Prince of the Kings of the earth*, as set down now at His Fathers right hand, as the Fathers Lord Deputy, to point out His Mediatory and given Kingdom ; and His reigning, for the good of the Elect, and to rule others for their sake : though not to subdue and make them willing Subjects ; yet, to bruise them with His Mace and Iron-Scepter. When, I say, he is speaking thus of Jesus Christ, his heart beginneth to warm ; and he breaketh out in a word of thanksgiving : wherein there is, 1. a description of the Person, to whom the thanksgiving is made. 2. The thanksgiving itself. The description is excellent, and of exceeding great consolation to the Church, as holding out Christs bowels, and the privileges and benefits that Believers have in and through Him. 1. In the Fountain they come from, *Him that loved us*. What a One is Christ ? He is He who loved us : this is the Bosome-grace, from whence all other Graces and Benefits do flow, *Prov. 8.* everlasting love, and the first and chief stile in all our praise. If Believers would know who Christ is ? It's he who loved us : a most comfortable stile. 2. In the particular benefits that flow from this love, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Every word hath an emphasis in it : He had not an empty and complementing love ; but such a love as moved Him to leave the height of Glory, and come down and take on our nature ; and in that nature to die, and shed His blood for us ; and by that blood, to wash us from the filthiness and guilt of sin, in taking away the evil of sin and wrath. And, in that He is said to wash us from sin in His own blood, It suppones, 1. That sin is a filthiness. 2. That this filthiness is not easily washen away. 3. That there is a great efficacie and real vertue in the blood of Christ, to wash the soul and cleanse it from sin, as if it had never sinned ; as there is efficacie and vertue in a fountain of water, to wash a filthy thing. And this was typified in those ceremonial and legal washings under the Law. 4. That, that wherewith Christ washeth Believers, is, His own blood : not the blood of Bulls and Goats ; but the blood of the first begotten from the dead, the blood of the true and faithful witnesse, the blood of the Prince of the Kings of the earth ; yea, the blood of Him which is, which was, and which is to come, the blood of Him who was, and is God, Therefore ( *Act. 20. 28.* ) it's said, *Feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood*. It holds out, not only the efficacie and satisfactoriness of the blood of Christ ; but also the end of His death : that it was not a meer Testimony and Witnesse-bearing, nor only to leave an example to others, ( as profane men, derogating from our blessed Lords death, affirm ) but, to wash His own from their sins in His blood, to take a-

way the guilt of sin in Justification, and to make the Power of His death come in and slay sin, and to sanctifie, as it is *1 Cor. 6.* *Such were some of you, but now you are washed*, that is, Justified and Sanctified. There is not a Name that Christ hath, but it hath some privilege and benefit in it to Believers ; it holds out love on His side, and consolation on ours ; and every benefit which comes to us, is a Name and Commendation to Him, and may be so used by us,

*Vers. 6.* In the description, He sets out how Christ, not only takes away what is ill, from us ; but how He abounds in conferring privileges on us. He not only takes away sin ; but, He hath made us Kings and Priests to God His Father : First, Kings, 1. In delivering us from the slavery of sin, that the most part of the world lives in ; and in making us masters over sin and sinful lusts, masters over the Devil and the World, and the Flesh in some measure. And this is a Princely thing : so the Church is set out, *Rev. 12.* as having the Moon, that is to say, the transitorie world under her feet. 2. Kings, in respect of a Spiritual reigning in our spirits with God, by an heavenly conversation ; *having our conversations in Heaven*, *Philip. 3. 20.* Col. 3. 1. in an holy and heavenly pride, and in a sort of kingly majesty, disdain- ing the ups and downs in the world. 3. Kings also, in title and right, being set as Kings on the Throne with Him, to execute the judgment written, *Psal. 149. 9.* This honour have all His Saints, in a spiritual way, and some way to judge the world in their practice : and they shall be Kings in possession, when that, which is here, shall have the full accomplishment : and all the Saints, as so many crowned Kings, shall follow Him in the clouds. Secondly, Priests, to offer their bodies a living Sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, *Rom. 12. 1.* to offer Prayers and Praises, the calves of their lips : and this is no small privilege, to have access to God as Priests. The Jews held these two, as great dignities, the Kingly and Priestly offices ; and Believers are called by Christ to both, so that they may come with boldnesse to the Throne of Grace, and enter within the Holiest, through the Vail, by that new and living way, being freed from the spirit of bondage and fear, which in a great part accompanied the Jews ceremonial Worship. 1. How many excellent consolations are here to Believers, and grounds of directions to them ? What grounds of consolation comparable to these, to be washed in that blood of the Lamb ; to be made Kings and Priests to God and Christs Father, that is, to no Idole, but to Him, to whom Christ is a Priest ? Here is life and immortality brought to light by the Gospel, privileges and benefits of an exceeding passing worth and excellency.

1. Comparing this Verse with *vers. 1.* Here Kings and Priests ; and there, His Servants. Observe, That there is no such royalty and dignity in the World, as to be our Lord Jesus his Servant ; it is truly to be a King, to reign ; and a Priest, to be consecrated to God : It consists not in looseness and carnal liberty ; but in new obedience : and the more obedient, circumspect and strict in Holiness, the greater liberty, majesty, and kingly stateliness. All our Lords Servants are Kings, so great a King is He, and so happy are they.

2. These Privileges lay an obligation on Believers, to carry themselves as such. 1. If Christs blood be given as a fountain to wash at, then make use of it for pardon of sin, Mortification and Sanctification. 2. Let us carry our selves Kingly. It's a beastly thing to be a servant of sin ; but, It's a Kingly thing and stately, to be minding the Throne, we are called to the faith and hope of ; to have our hearts and conversation suitable to that holy and heavenly place ; to have royal spirits, disdain- ing, and trampling on the things of a present world, as unworthy of our hearts and affections.

3. Comparing this with the former, when he speaks of Christ, his affections warms ; and when he speaks of the benefits, which come by Him, it leads him to the love they came from : and by that,

that, again, he is led to praise Him, and he cannot get Jesus Christ set high enough. *Observe*, Believers hearts should warm, and be often warming themselves with thoughts of Christ, and venting their warmth of affection to Him in praise: It's a sweet thing, when Believers hearts cannot part with Christ;

but, when ever He comes in their mind or mouth, still to give Him a word of praise, and come to their purpose again, as *John* doth here; And it 's often thus with *Paul*, as *1 Tim.* 1. 17. *Ephes.* 3. 20.

## LECTURE III.

*Verf. 7. Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him: even so, Amen.*

8. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*

9. *I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the Isle that is called Patmos, for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

**I**T's a concerning message that Christ is now sending to His Church: therefore there is the larger preface to stir them up he writs to, to make that which he sends welcome.

We heard, from the 4. verse, the particular Inscription or direction of this Book, as an Epistle: and when he hath wished *grace and peace*, and set down the parties from whom the *grace and peace* is wished, and the Epistle is sent; he turns it over in a thanksgiving to Christ, especially, pitching on Him, as looking to the benefits and privileges they enjoyed through Him; as being, in a special way, purchased by Him: and this thanksgiving, or doxologie, is all, that he and all Saints can give Christ, for all that He hath done for them; *unto him be glory and dominion*. Believers, in looking on Christs purchase, would be more in ascribing glory and dominion to Him; not that they can add any new glory to Him, or enlarge His Dominion; but it is to acknowledge, that to Him belongs glory and dominion, as it's afterwards, *Chap. 5. verf. 12. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and glory, and blessing*. It's Believers expression, and hearty assent, in approving Gods purpose and project in making Him Head over all the Church.

*Verf. 7.* He seems to come back where he left, when he began his thanksgiving, to speak of Jesus Christ under the last title of *Prince of the Kings of the earth*; and that by way of pre-occupying an objection, which carnal hearts might make: and it is this. Is He *Prince of the Kings of the earth*, who was put to death; and laid in the Grave? Where is He now, if He be such a *Prince*? He answereth, *Behold, he cometh with clouds*: though many profane carnal hearts now do not acknowledge Him; yet, He shall one day be acknowledged: He is now out of sight; but it will not be long so: He is making ready for His coming to Judgement, and is coming, *Chap. 22. 20. Surely I come quickly*. This coming, in the present time, implyeth two things. 1. The seasonableness of His coming; He misses no time, He comes quickly. 2. That even the short time He delays, He is making ready, as it were, for His coming; He is leading Witnesses, and sitting Processes, and discovering the truth and falshood of every thing; and every thing that may further His coming, is going forward; He is not idle in reference to His last coming to Judgement, but is hastening all. Secondly, His coming to Judgement, is set out in the majesty and stateliness of it; under an expression ordinary in the Prophets (as much of this Book is) *He cometh with clouds*. So *Psal. 97. 2. Clouds and darkness are round about him*: and *Matth. 24. 30. He*

shall come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. So *Psal. 18. 10, 11*. To set out the stateliness of the Judge that cometh thus backed with Coelestial Majesty. Thirdly, His coming is set out by the palpableness and visibleness of it, *Every eye shall see him*: though most part of Atheists think not of his coming now; yet when He shall come, there shall not be a reasonable creature, that ever had life on Earth, whether Believer, or unbeliever, but they shall with their eyes see Him in that day. Fourthly, Among them that shall see Him, these are added, *They also who pierced Him*: under which is comprehended His greatest Enemies; and it takes in both those, who had their hands hote in his blood, and killed him bodily; and those who crucified, and do crucifie Him spiritually, as it's said, *Chap. 11. 8. He was crucified in spiritual Sodom, they shall all, in that day, be called before His Barr, and be forced to look on Him*. A fifth circumstance in His coming, *All kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him*; in the Original, *all the Tribes of the earth*: it is a word borrowed from the Jews their manner of reckoning, who counted their Kingdoms by Tribes. The meaning is, all the Kingdoms of the earth, and those that laugh at Him now, and think little of His coming, when it is spoken of, shall wail because of Him, that is, because of their slighting of Him; and now seeing Him to be their Judge, whom they slighted and contemned: and though there be now a kindly mourning, like that in *Zach. 12. 10. They shall look upon Him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn*; yet, this being to be at the day of Judgement, and spoken of the enemies that think nothing of Him now, we take it to be an anxious howling of enemies, when they shall see Christ come in the clouds to the great Judgement, and all His Angels and Saints about Him; as *Matth. 24. 30. Then shall all the Tribes of the earth mourn*. Sixthly, There is a sixth circumstance added, *even so, Amen*: which is *Johns* setting to his seal, to His coming; and its doubled (as it is ordinary) both in the Greek and Hebrew. He wisheth He may come, and believeth He will come, that it may be as he hath said, even as he closeth his *Revelation, Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus*. And so it looketh to His stately way of coming, and the effects it shall have in the World, it being for His Glory, to vindicate Himself from the rubs that His profane enemies put upon Him in the World, he sayes *Amen* to that, *even so, Amen*.

*Observe*, 1. Our Lord Jesus, that was Crucified, and thought little of, shall be as high as ever He was low in the open view of all His enemies. The time is coming (and now is advancing fast forward) when He shall take unto Him His Kingdom; and be



be visibly seen by all the Kingdoms of the earth, to be the Judge of quick and dead, the Prince of the Kings of the earth. This is one of the Articles of our Creed; and we would make use of this Scripture to confirm it: there is a time coming, and it is not far off, when He shall set His Throne in the Clouds, and all eyes shall see Him. Think ye this true, that there is a time coming, when we that are here, and all others, shall see Christ in His humane Nature, and also much of His Godhead as He shall be pleased to let out, and we capable of? Think on it, and let it not go with a word; but consider how ye will meet Him and stand before Him: and when ye meet with difficulties, or creature-comforts that would turn you aside, Remember on this day: and where will they all be, when ye shall be arrested to stand before Him, *Eccles. 11. 9.*

*Obs. 2.* Christ's coming to Judgement, is a special part of His stateliness, and a main part of the Universalness of His Kingly Office as Mediator, when He shall come and sit as Judge, and give sentence on godly and wicked, and send away the one, and welcome the other. This will be one of His stateliest dayes, when He shall vindicate Himself from profane men, and bear Himself out to His people in His exceeding Glory. Believers, believe there is such a Day; and let it quiet your hearts in the mean time of all these confusions.

*Obs. 3.* Our Lord Jesus His coming to Judgement, will be a doleful coming to the most part of the World: they also who pierced Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him; they shall cry to the hills, *Fall on us*, and to the mountains, *cover us*; and would be glad to get into the clefts of the rocks, and to the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the Glory of His Majesty, *Isai. 2. 12.* Men would think the greatest hill or mountain a light burden in that Day, to get themselves hid from the piercing view of a slighted and provoked Mediator. Oh, but that will be bitter and fore to bide! Think upon it. There is a time coming, when many of you that hears this same word, if Grace prevent not, shall see and find the truth of it. It's terrible, but experience will make it true: many of you now skars to hear tell of Christs coming to Judgement; but when that day cometh, it shall be bitter in another kind to you, when this bitter yelling noise, *crying and howling*, shall be among the carnal World that slighted Him, and ye shall find your selves among them, and shall share with them; and every cry and yell about you, shall be a new wound. Therefore humble your selves, and seek for mercy and reconciliation in time: for, either must you get it now, or never.

*Obs. 4.* A hearty consenting and saying *Amen* to Christs coming to Judgement, to have fore-thoughts of it, and to be longing for it, and wishing that it may come, is a good token of a Believer and friend of Christ, to whom this day will be a comfort. But, if many of us had our own mind, we would never wish to die, nor that there should be a day of Judgement.

*Vers. 8.* Christ cometh in Himself to tell what He is, and to confirm what John hath said of Him, *I am Alpha and Omega*: which are two letters in the Greek Alphabet; *Alpha*, the first, and *Omega*, the last: and the meaning is in the next words, *the beginning and ending*. *The beginning*, He who gives all things a being and beginning, and have no beginning My self: *The ending*, He who puts an end to all things, and in whom all things end, and hath no ending my self: for, all things terminate in Him as their end, *Rom. 11. 36.* *To Him are all things, which is, which was, and which is to come*, the same description which was given to God the Father, *vers. 4.* setting out the Immutability and unchangeableness of His being, that He is from Eternity to Eternity the same, and as we shew, the title *JEHOVAH* taketh in these three words. Then more plainly, *the Almighty*: every word here is a proper Attribute of God; He is infinite in power, sovereign in dominion, and not bounded as creatures

are; And this is clear to be spoken of Christ, not onely from the scope, (*John* being to set out Christ from whom He had this Revelation) but from the 11. *vers.* following, where he gives Him the same titles over again; or rather, Christ, speaking of Himself, taketh and repeateth the same titles.

*Obs. 1.* Our Lord Jesus Christ, is God equal with the Father, and holy Ghost: He, who is the first and last, the beginning and the ending, which is, which was, and which is to come, the Almighty, must be God. These titles can agree to no other: there is no created being capable of any of these titles; but He is such. Therefore, &c.

*Obs. 2.* The stateliness and Majesty of our Lord Jesus Christ: What an excellent and stately Person is He? there is not a property attributed to God, but it is agreeable to Christ. The use of it, is, to bring hearts to high thoughts of Christ: and it is not for nought, but for this end that the Scripture insists so much in giving Him such stately stiles, even to wear souls out of their Atheistical thoughts of Him, and to prefer and esteem Him above all.

3. Looking upon these words as spoken by Christ Himself: after John hath described Him, He cometh in, and takes it off Johns hand, and describes Himself. *Observe*, That our Lord Jesus own mouth, can best tell what Himself is: hearing, reading, speaking, writing will not do it; if the description come not out of Christs own mouth, it will do little on hearers.

*Vers. 9.* Follows the body of this Book, or Epistle. We will not now enter on a particular division of it. That which is *vers. 19.* of this same Chapter, shall serve for the time, *Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter*. The whole may be taken up in these two, 1. John his representing the case of things, as they were for the present, and, 2. as they were to be hereafter.

The first of these, to wit, his representing the case of things as they then were, is, that which is set down in the first three Chapters: wherein is set out the case that the seven Churches of Asia were in; which he discovers to themselves, and to the World; and shews how many foul faults they had under a fair name and profession: and this takes up John's first vision.

That which is from the 9. *verse*, to the end of this Chapter, we take up in these three. 1. There is the vision it self, what John saw and what he heard, from *vers. 10.* to *vers. 17.* mixed throw other. 2. In the 9. and 10. *verses*, some circumstances are set down concerning John and the manner of his receiving the vision, to make way for the faith of the vision, and the whole story that follows. 3. From the 17. *verse* to the end, some circumstances, that make way for John his writing and publishing what he saw and heard, are recorded.

The first circumstance that makes way for the faith of the vision and story, is, the person by whom Christ wrote, *I John*: of whom we have heard before in the entry. And he sets out himself here further, under several expressions or titles. 1. *Who also am your brother*; a son of the same house, a joynt heir with you in the same Kingdom; a comforting title to them, and a humbling title to him. Those he wrote to, being brethren, he reckons in himself a brother with them: for, the most eminent Believers, John, Paul, Abraham, David, &c. come in to be brethren with the meanest Believers; all being children of one Father, of one House, heirs of one Inheritance: and Abraham, his being a brother, and John his being a brother, pre-judgeth not the least of them to whom he writeth. And as all have one Father; so all are begotten by the same word, have one Spirit here, and Glory for ever hereafter. 2. The next title he describes himself by, is, *companion in tribulation*, that is, a fellow sufferer with you, a sharer of the sufferings of Christ as well as you; I, who am a great Apostle am not exempted from sufferings more than ye are, who are in Smyrna, Philadelphia, &c.

*phid, &c.* I have mine own share of the Croſſe, as ye have; yea, he takes it to himſelf as a ſide of honour, as a great prerogative and dignity, as *Paul*, Ephel. 3. 1. *I Paul the priſoner of Jeſus Chriſt for you Gentiles*. So it is, *I John*, who, as I am ſuffering with you, ſo I am confined for Preaching to you in *Patmos*: pointing out this, that as all Believers are brethren; ſo all have one lot in ſuffering here away; and none are exempted from the Croſſe: were it the Diſciple whom Jeſus loved and leaned on His boſom at the Supper, the night He was betrayed; yet, he muſt be a companion in tribulation, and come into heaven at the ſame door with the reſt. Folks would not think this ſtrange, that afflictions light on theſe whom Chriſt loves beſt: the ſervant is not greater than the Lord. It ſhould comfort ſufferers, and make them look on it, as their prerogative, to be ſufferers for Chriſt. 3. There is a further aggravation, or explication, of the former, and in the Kingdom and Patience of Jeſus Chriſt. Left it ſhould be thought any thing derogatory to be a ſufferer, he ſays, he is a companion in the Kingdom and Patience of Jeſus Chriſt with them. And theſe two words, Kingdom and Patience, are put together, not only to ſhew He is a King and a Prieſt with other Believers; but to ſhew this much, that Chriſts Kingdom, is often more in the exerciſe of patience than in dominion; and that the Subjects of Chriſts Kingdom here, are more put to exerciſe patience than to reign. His meaning is, I am a ſharer with you in the Spiritual Kingdom of Chriſt, that needeth no worldly grandour, but hath need of patience. And it ſaith, that he counts it his prerogative to be ſingled out, and put to patient ſuffering, for giving teſtimony to Chriſt as King of His Church. Afflictions for Chriſt, and ſharing in His Kingdom, may ſtand well together for the time and in reference to the upſhot, if we ſuffer with Him, we ſhall reign with Him.

A ſecond circumſtance, which is alſo a further deſcription of himſelf, is, from the place and cauſe. 1. From the place of his ſuffering, *I was in the Iſle which is called Patmos*. This *Patmos*, is an Iſle in the *Ægean-Sea*, near the coaſt of *Aſia* the leſs, not far from the ſeven Churches in *Aſia*, to whom he writeth: a place which is called barren, by them who write of it; not much inhabited then, nor now, becauſe of the barrenneſs of it: therefore it was a greater evidence of the cruelty of *Johns* perſecutors that baniſhed him thither. 2. The cauſe, is, *for the Word of God, and for the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt*, that is, for his Preaching the Word of God, and for his owning and maintain-

ing Chriſts Goſpel; for, his bearing teſtimony, that Jeſus Chriſt was the King, Prieſt, and Prophet of His Church, and the eternal ſubſtantial Word of the eternal Father; for Chriſts cauſe, who is the Word of God; or, for bearing teſtimony to Him. The way how he came to this Iſland, is not ſet down; but Hiſtory tells, [*Euseb. lib. 3. cap. 14. ex Irenæo & Clem. Alex.*] it was in the fourteenth year of *Domitian* the Emperour, when he raiſed the ſecond perſecution againſt the Church of Chriſt, about the 97. year of our Lord, that he, after he had tortured *John*, baniſhed him to this Iſle: near about the ſame time of *Johns* age. This then is the place that *John* was baniſhed to; and yet, in the ſame place, he hath ſweet fellowſhip with God: is countenanced of Him, and honoured to be the carrier of this Revelation to the Church.

1. See here how far graceleſs and profane perſecutors, (ſuch as this beaſt *Domitian* was) may prevail againſt the ſervants of Jeſus Chriſt, when he doth baniſh *John* to *Patmos*, beſide other horrible perſecutions, which he raiſed againſt the Church. Chriſt, by this, would have us know His Kingdom is not of this World.

2. Solitarineſs for Chriſt, is not the worſt condition. Chriſt can make up that another way: and if there be a neceſſity of withdrawing men from their duty, as of Miniſters from their publick Miniſtery, He can make it tend as much to their private benefit, and to the publick good of His Church, if not more: neither doth *John* loſe any thing by his baniſhment and confinement; for, he finds more intimate and ſweet communion and fellowſhip with Chriſt, and gets more of His mind: nor doth the Church loſe any thing by it; for, ſhe gets this Revelation of Gods mind. If we believed this, we would never go out of Gods way, to make up His work: for, if He pleaſe to lay us by, He knows how to make up that, both to our ſelves and Gods people. The Chriſtian Church, is as much beholden to *Pauls* imprisonment in Epistles, as to his liberty in Preaching.

3. Honest ſuffering for Chriſt, hath often with it the freſheſt and cleareſt manifeſtations of Chriſt. Folks that will continue faithful, and bide by their duty through ſufferings, they ſhall not only not be loſers, but gainers, 1 Pet. 4. 14. *If ye be reproached for the Name of Chriſt, happy are ye: for, the Spirit of God, and of Glory reſteth upon you*. I would have none carnal nor vain in this, but humbly confident and conſtant, as they would thrive in their Spiritual condition and maintain their peace.

## LECTURE IV.

Verſ. 10. *I was in the ſpirit on the Lords day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.*

**B**Efore *John* come particularly to the Viſion he ſaw, he inſiſteth in ſome particular circumſtances, that make way to the more full faith and credit of the Viſion and Story that followeth; and though they be only circumſtances in themſelves; yet they are profitable and conducing to the main end he hath before him. We heard of the firſt and ſecond circumſtance *how*, and *where* *John* was, when he got this Viſion.

Followeth in the 10 verſ. the third and fourth circumſtances, that is, the day when he got this Viſion, and the frame he was in, *I was in the ſpirit on the Lords day*. The words, in the Original, are, *I was in the ſpirit on that Lords day*, pointing out a day ſingularly, and a day that in a particular and ſpecial man-

ner is called *His Day*, beſide any other day, that *Dominik* day, or day which is the Lords.

That we may have acceſs to the uſe, we ſhall ſpeak a little to theſe two. 1. What particular day this is, ſeeing there is no mention made what day it is, more than this, that it is called *The Lords day*. 2. What it is to be in the ſpirit on this day.

For clearing of the firſt of theſe two, ye would conſider, that there is but one other phraſe in Scripture like this; and it is ſpoken of the Lords Supper, 1 Cor. 11. *This is not to eat the Lords Supper*. They that know the Original, know alſo this phraſe to be ſingular, like this of the Lord's day, *ἐν τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ*, and 1 Cor. 11. 20. *κυριακὸν δειπνῶν*, which



is opposed unto, and contradistinguished from, *7012109 1d 1000*: which was not set apart from other suppers, and common use, as this was: And these two, being by one particular phrase expressed; we must expound the one by the other. Now, the *Lords Supper*, is called so, for three Reasons; for which also, we conceive this day, to be called the *Lords day*. 1. The *Lords Supper*, because of the *Lords* singular instituting that Bread and Wine for a special and religious end, distinguishing, differencing and setting it apart from a common use, to a more special use: And so, this day, is called *the Lords day*: because of the *Lords* separating and setting apart this day for His special Service and Worship: and in that, distinguishing it from other dayes, as He had done that Supper from common suppers. 2. *The Lords Supper*, for its special signification, Jesus Christ and His benefits being especially set out in it, His death and sufferings pointed at, and the benefits we have thereby. So this day, is called, *The Lords day*, because it's of special signification, pointing out not so much Gods ceasing from the work of Creation, as our *Lords* ceasing from the work of Redemption: as the *Lords Supper* is for the remembrance of His death, till He come again; so is this day, for remembering the work of Redemption, and His Resurrection, till He come again. 3. *The Lords Supper*: because of its special end, to set out the honour of the Mediator, and the Worship, and Ordinances brought in by Him under the New Testament; so to distinguish it from the Passover. So this day, is called *the Lords day*, for the same reason, to set out the honour of the Mediator, and that it may be enrolled among the Ordinances of the New Testament: therefore, when in the New Testament, ought is called the *Lords*, it points ordinarily at Christ the Mediator, and at the second Person of the God head, as *1 Corin. 8. 6. One God*, distinguished from *One Lord*. We take it then for granted, that it is called *the Lords day*, for these Reasons: because it's a special day, set apart for the *Lords* use. of special signification, and for a special end. And Secondly, That it is a special day, known to the Church, may appear: for else, *John* would not have given it such a denomination; and that it points at some thing of Christ, and so is separated from any Jewish day, and common day, It is a day known singularly to relate to Christ. To clear it, consider, it must either be the first day of the Week, or some other: But none other day it is. *Ergo, &c.* If any other, it can be supposed onely one of these two: either, not any particular day of the Week, but any special day or time of Christs appearing or manifesting Himself; Or else the Jewish Sabbath day. Now, neither of these can be meant by the *Lords day*. 1. Not the former: for, such a day of Christs special appearing, not being named here, it would leave the Church in an uncertainty to know what day was meant; yet is this day mentioned, to point it out from other dayes; that is the scope why it is so designed. Beside, if it were any such day, it would point at no one day; for there are many times of Christs appearing. It's not so to be understood then, though even so our *Lords appearing* may agree to the first day of the Week, whereon most frequently He appeared after His Resurrection to His Disciples, as *Mat. 28. 1. Joh. 20. 26. Acts 1. 2.* 2. Neither the latter, to wit, the Jewish Sabbath day. 1. Because it's ever called the Sabbath, and gets the own name that it formerly had: and the giving of it this name, will more obscure then clear the day. 2. Because the Jewish Sabbaths were then annulled, as *Col. 2. 16. Let none judge you in meat or drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new Moon, or of the Sabbath dayes*; Therefore then can they not be called the *Lords day*. And *Gal. 4. 10.* they are reproved for observing Dayes, and Moneths, and Times, and Years, where it is clear, the Jewish new Moons, Sabbaths and Festivites were then, and before that time abolished in so far as peculiar to them, though all distinction of days

was not taken away, more than all distinctions of the Elements in the *Lords Supper* from other Meat: because distinction of meat was condemned there also; But this followeth, all Jewish distinction both of meat and dayes was taken away, but what is still signified by Christ, that continues. 3. *The Lords day*, in the phrase of the New Testament, looks to Christ, as having its name some way from him: which cannot be said of the Jewish Sabbath; But this is called *the Lords day*, as pointing at an Ordinance of the New Testament, whereas the Jewish Sabbath had a respect to the Old Testament Ordinances. 3. It remaineth therefore, it must be the first day of the Week, because no other day can lay claim to it: it is that day, which we call Sunday, or, the Christian Sabbath; and was, in the Primitive times, called *The Lords day*. 1. Because the Reasons why a day is called *The Lords day*, do agree to it especially. The Jewish Sabbath, was called *The Lords day*, *Exod. 20. 8.* because on it He ceased from the works of Creation: This day is called *The Lords day*, because on it He ceased from the work of Redemption, *Mar. 16. 1. 2. Luke 24. 1. 2. Joh. 20. 1.* It's that day, whereon our Lord not only rose; but several times did meet with His Disciples: and many mark several privileges and benefits conferred on this day, as the pouring out of the holy Ghost, *Acts 2.* And more reasons might be given, whereby this day is singularly beyond others to be called *His*. 2. Because this first day of the Week and no other, was set apart for the *Lords* Worship and Service, as distinguished from other days. And *Johns* end here, is, to fix on a particular day, known to them, and so esteemed of among them, as such a day. That it was set apart for the Lord and His Worship, is clear, not onely from places we have named, but from *Acts. 20. 7. upon the first day of the week, when the Disciples came together, to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech untill midnight*: Which intimates not onely a meeting, but a custome of meeting, and that for Preaching, Prayer, and celebration of the *Lords Supper*. So *1 Corin. 16. 2. upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him*; and in the 1. vers. he tells, concerning the Collection of the Saints, he had given the same order to the Churches of *Galatia*. If it be asked, Why doth *Paul* point at the first day of the Week, and bids give themselves to Charity that day: here it is, because that day was dedicated to Gods Service and Worship, whereof Charity was a pendicle: And (as we hinted at) this was not peculiar to one Church, as *Corinth*: but was common to all the Churches. The like order was in all the Churches of *Galatia*: and it doth not point at *Pauls* instituting a day; but at his supposing of it to be instituted; and at his injoyning of a positive duty of Charity meet for that day. And it is observable, that though the Saints had meetings on other dayes; yet, is it never said, they did meet the second, third, or fourth dayes, &c. but on the first: which certainly is done, to shew a peculiarity in that day, and the meetings on it; yea, few or none deny this denomination to signify the first day on this account, it being so clear from Antiquity, and no other day being here to compet with it, & that can lay such claim to this denomination as this day doth; and was by the most Ancient still so named.

For the second thing to be cleared: What it is to be in the Spirit on the *Lords day*? To be in the Spirit, is, First, to be Spiritual, to have the habits of Grace, and a new Nature: and thus it taketh in the ordinary walk of Believers, *Gal. 5. 16, 25.* Secondly, More especially, it is for these who are habitually in the Spirit, to be actually, and in a more eminent measure in the Spirit, as *Eph. 5. 18. to be filled with the Spirit*, to be in a holy rapture and ecstasie, is warranted and allowed to Believers in a more special frame, and at more special times to be in a spiritualness abstracted from carnalness, and lawful things,

things, more than ordinary. Thirdly, It is to be in the Spirit in an extraordinary manner and measure, or to be in an extraordinary rapture, the Spirit revealing something extraordinarily; and this is to be in the Spirit, in a sense different from the former, albeit confisting with them. We cannot exclude any of these in this place: for *John* was regenerated, and was habitually spiritual and gracious; but we especially include the last two: As if he said, though I was absent from company and Christian fellowship, and had not a Congregation to Preach in on the Lords day; yet I was in the Spirit, exercising the habits of grace, and I was in an eminent, spiritual and holy frame; the Spirit elevating my Spirit: (which is that spoken of, *Isai.* 58. 12. *If thou call the Sabbath a delight, the Holy of the Lord, &c.*) and the Lord taketh him in this spiritual frame, and strain, and ravisheth him in the Spirit: and from the second step he brings him up to the third, to be in Spirit as an extraordinary Prophet, as we take *Peter* to have been, *Act.* 10. when he went up to Pray, that is, to the second step; and fell in a Trance, and saw Heaven opened, which is the third. We think the same hath been *John's* case here.

The words give occasion to speak of several Doctrines, as 1. The good that is to be gotten on the Lords day, when folks are in a spiritual frame. 2. That when folks are separated from the publick Ordinances, they would be making it up in private, by giving themselves to spiritual exercises. 3. And that God not only can, but doth make up the good to be gotten by the publick, by private and secret fellowship with himself, when believers in him are banished from, or denuded of the publick Ordinances. But not to insist on these, they give occasion to speak a little of these three things. 1. The institution of the Lords day. 2. The name that the Lords day gets. 3. Of the sanctification of it, or of a special part, wherein the sanctification of it consists.

For the first, To wit, for the institution of this Day, several Arguments are here; or, we may argue several ways to prove it. 1. If in the Apostles time this day was set apart for the Lords Worship and Service, and in a special manner called *His*, as being kept to Him on a moral ground, Then we have warrant, and it's our duty to keep it for the same end and use: for, the practice of extraordinary men, grounded on moral and perpetual Reasons, and that were not peculiar to them as extraordinary, but are common to them and us (as the Grounds and Reasons of the setting apart this day are, it being for the remembrance of his Resurrection, and the bringing in of a new World; and therefore, all did from the beginning, keep that day) are binding to us, as is clear. But the first day of the Week, was appointed to be the Lord's day, in the Apostles times; and singled out and set apart for his service on a moral ground, (for, no ground peculiar to them can be given) Therefore certainly it must be our duty to keep it. 2. If the first day of the Week, was singled out from other days, and conated the Lords day, Then there behoved to be an Institution for it, or, a supposed institution, that is, it must be the Lords day, either because he instituted it, when he spoke many things to his Apostles after his Resurrection, concerning the right ordering of his House and Worship; and by his practice, observed and sanctified it, for his special Service; or, because these that were infallibly guided and led by his Spirit, instructed and gave warrant to keep it: For, without an institution and command, it is not to be kept, or named so, more than another day. But this first day, was in practice, singled out beside all other days, and is accounted the Lords in a special manner, as is said, Therefore there must be some institution of it. 3. Comparing this Text with 1 *Cor.* 11. 20. If the first day of the Week be the Lords day, as the Sacrament of the Supper is the Lords Supper, then it must be by his appointment and institution *His*; But so the phrase in both places is to be

understood. *Ergo*, by comparing these two places, the peculiarity of the phrase is such, that (there being no other phrase like them in Scripture) it seemeth the holy Ghost warrants us to gather the reasons of this denomination of the one from the other, though the institution of this day be not so clearly expressed, as the institution of the Lords Supper. For it's a received Rule for expounding Scripture, to expound more dark places, by places that are more full and clear: And therefore conclude we, that the Lord's day is to be called the Lords: because of its institution, though we know not where; because for the same reason, the Supper is called *His*, there being no solid ground to conclude upon: And they who give reasons to the contrary, must make it appear, that there are other reasons more pregnant, or else the language of the holy Ghost must have weight with us. 4. This first day is the Lords, as the seventh day is called *His*, or any other thing in the Old Testament; but that is ever because of his setting apart that day, or that thing for His own, from others of that kind, Therefore it must be so here.

There are some exceptions, made by some worthy men, which we shall speak a word to, As 1. If it be so, it will follow that all days are not alike, contrary to *Rom.* 14. 14. *Gal.* 4. 10. *Col.* 2. 16. where the Scripture seems to say plainly, that all days are alike: Therefore the Lords day cannot be so understood. *Ans.* This doth indeed directly contradict the letter of the Text: For either this Text pointeth at one day by another, or else it doth nothing. 2. The Apostles scope in the places that seem to be contrary to this, is clear: when he casts the Jewish Sabbath and holy days, he casts them alike in respect of Jewish observation only; or, in so far as they were Jewish and Typical: for, Christ had taken them away in that respect, even as He casteth meats also, yet without prejudice of the Sacraments: and this confirmeth our Argument. For if Jewish Days and Sabbaths, were taken away forty years and more, as is clear by *Paul*, before *John* wrote this Revelation, in as far as they were Jewish, and yet *John* speaks of a Lords day, as differed from other days, it says it continued when they were abolished. There is a great odds betwixt laying aside of Jewish days, and the Lords day: and when *John* speaks of the Lords day, he speaks of it in the singular number, in opposition to those many days, the Jews had, under the ceremonial Law. And even that learned Doctor granteth this place to speak of the first day, and the Churches practice to meet on it also, and, in several respects, to be privileged beyond other days.

A second exception is, If this day be so counted of, it will bring in the sanctifying of it, in as eminent a measure, as the Jews Sabbath was. And, is not that to judaize? *Ans.* Distinguish betwixt things Ceremonial or Typical, and things Moral and Perpetual: We bring back nothing that was Ceremonial and Typical, as their Sabbaths of Weeks, Sacrifices, and many other things were; but for Moral duties, they become us as well as the Jews, and bind Christians to the end of the World. And this brings not back Judaism, neither leads us to Sacrifices, and the like, which pointed at Christ to come; but contrarily, this day and the duties of it, hold our Christ already come: which destroyeth all these Ceremonies and Sacrifices, and declareth them to be gone.

A third exception, It cannot be compared with the Lords Supper: For, 1. The Lords Supper, is clearly instituted; but this is not clear in the institution thereof. 2. The Lords Supper is a Sacrament; this is not: and days may be changed, as Sacraments cannot. *Ans.* 1. To the last part: It is a begging of the Question: if it be the Lords day, set apart for His Service, all the world cannot change it, except He, who can change Sacraments also. 2. To the first part: That the institution of this day is not so clear, as the institution of the



Supper. *Ans.* We do not paralel them in respect of clearness of institution; but, in respect of the ground, or reason why they get this name: which suppons an institution. If the Sacrament of the Supper, be called the Lords Supper, because instituted by him, for a special use; so must the Lords day get this name on this reason; or, some better or clearer reason from Scripture must be given.

For the second, Seeing it gets this name to be called the *Lords day*: It may be questioned here concerning our manner of speaking of days, calling the Lords day *Sunday*, the next day after it *Munday*, &c. which hath the first rise from Superstition, if not from Idolatry; some of them being attributed to Planets, as *Sunday* and *Munday*; some of them to Idols, as *Thursday*, &c. But to speak to the thing it self, look to the Primitive times, we will find *Sunday* called the *Lords day*: and the days of the Week, by the first, second, third, &c. But the names of days, being like the names of Places and Moneths, folks must speak of them, as they are in use, and Scripture warrants us so to do, *Act. 17. 22.* Paul is said to stand in the midst of *Marshall*. *Act. 28. 11.* speaketh of a Ship; whose sign was *Castor*, and *Pollux*. So, *March*, *January*, *July* and *August*, are from the Idols *Mars* and *Janus*; or, derived from men that appropriate more than ordinary to themselves. And though it was ordinary to Christians, in the Primitive times, to call this day the *Lords day* among themselves; yet, when they had dealing with the *Jews*, they called it *the Sabbath*; and when they had dealing with the heathen, they called it the *Sunday*. And so, though it be best to speak of days as Scripture nameth them; yet, it is agreeable with Scripture, to design or denominate them, as they are in use among a people, especially where no superstitious use is in naming of them.

For the third, The Sanctification of this day. It is pointed out in *John* his saying he was in the Spirit on the *Lords day*: to point out this, that this day requireth a special Sanctification and setting apart to Worship God. And there are four steps of it mentioned in the Scripture. The 1. is negative abstinence, not only from sin, but from our civil and ordinary affairs, which are lawful on other days, but not on this day, *Isai. 58. 13.*

The 2. is positive: In devoting it to God, and spending the whole day in duties of Worship, in reading, hearing, praying, singing, breaking of bread, or celebrating the Communion, *Act. 20. 7.* And that, not only in private duties, but in publick: and in private, when the publick is interrupted, except in cases of necessity. 3. It should be spent in the duties of charity: though the sanctification of this day cannot consist with working; yet, it may stand well with giving of almes, and seeing to the necessities of others, *1 Cor. 16. 1, 2.* A fourth step is, in the Text: To have a holy and sanctified frame, a divine stamp, a heavenly conversation, more than ordinarily taken up with God and Christ, and the things of another Life that day. This is the main thing wherein the Sabbath is to be Sanctified, and wherein it represents heaven, to be abstracted from the world, and to be living above in our Spirits, eminently ravished in Spirit, as abstracted from things, we are to be taken up with on other days. The frame of a Sabbath, should be a kind of ravishment, wherein not only we are not taken up with working our ordinary callings, but we do go about Prayer and other Spiritual duties in a more heavenly way, than on other days, and that with a difference in our frame, being more elevated and Spiritual, we should be other men, in more divine contemplation. This is the main thing called for in sanctifying the Sabbath: and therefore, *Heb. 4.* heaven is set out by the Sabbath: wherein there ought not only to be a ceasing from our own works; but an entering into our rest, *Heb. 4. 10.* as it is (*Isai. 58. 13.*) a delighting in God, calling the Sabbath our delight, the holy of the Lord, and honourable, the heart being taken up with it.

Remember from all that hath been said, this day is the *Lords day*: And it saith that folks should spend it, not as they like; but for Him, and about the duties of His service. It is not the sanctifying of the Sabbath to spend an hour or two in publick, and the rest of it in our own discourses, pleasing and delightful to our selves. All days are Gods; but He hath given you six, and reserved the seventh to Himself. Ye should be with Him in the Spirit on the *Lords day*: which is the main use of all that hath been said.

## LECTURE V.

Verf. 10. *I was in the spirit on the Lords day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.*

11. *Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and what thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven Churches which are in Asia, unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.*

**J**OH<sup>N</sup> hath in the verses before, and in the beginning of this, put by the particular circumstances relating to this vision: we shall say no more of them. We come to the vision it self, in the rest of the chapter, with some circumstances, making way to *John*'s writing of what he saw.

We comprehend, under the vision, not only what is objected to the eye; or what *John* saw; but all that he sees or hears, whereby some new thing is represented to *John*; or that which he had heard or seen before, is again more clearly revealed, and made known to him, as it used to be in the extraordinary Prophets, having Gods mind, several ways, manifested to them.

This part of the vision hath three steps, First, What *John*

heard, from the midst of *vers. 10.* to *vers. 12.* Secondly, what he did, *vers. 12.* And, Thirdly, Followeth that which he saw, to *vers. 17.* The rest of the Chapter from *vers. 17.* hath some following effects and circumstances, to clear the vision, and *John*'s writing of it.

That which *John* heard, is three ways described: 1. In the nature of the voice, which he heard. 2. From the place where, or the manner or way how he heard it; the voice spake behind him. 3. The particular matter that was spoken. First, The nature of the voice which he heard, is set out with two words. 1. It's called a *great voice*. 2. It was a voice as of a trumpet, or, like a trumpet.

1. A *great voice*, that is a mighty sound, a voice that made a great

a great noise, as afterwards, *vers. 19.* His voice was as the sound of many waters, like the tumbling down of a great river over a high fall or precipice.

2. It was a voice as of a trumpet, that is, 1. Not a confused or inarticulate sound, but a stately voice, having a kind of majesty with it. 2. Like a trumpet, giving a certain and distinct sound. And, 3. Like a trumpet, to stir up John to attention, to give him an alarm, to set him on his watch and guard, to observe what he saw and heard. And it imports these four things, which might be so many grounds of Doctrine. 1. The majesty of the Person, who was speaking to John, that John may come to take Him up; it is to shew that it was no common Person, but our Lord Jesus Christ, that is stately in His coming: and this is the first thing the folks should have, when they come to hear the Word, sh<sup>d</sup> be affected with the majesty of Him who speaketh, and consider it's His voice, who shakes the heaven and the earth, that makes the birds to calve, &c. *Psal. 29.* 2. It is to point out to John the great distance between him and the Person that speaketh to him, and so to humble him, and to affect him with a humbling and kindly sense of his own infirmity. And these two go together, to wit, an impression of the stateliness and majesty of God, who speaks; and an humble sense of infirmity in the creature. See it in Abraham, *Gen. 18. 17.* Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, who am but dust and ashes. And *vers. 25.* Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? And they are also joyned, *Ecc. 5. 1, 2.* Keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of God: God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: let thy words be few. 3. It is to put John to an holy attention to hear, and to be watchful in hearing what He was to say to him: the trumpet soundeth that he may be the better taken heed to when He speaks. And this is also a good property of hearers, when, as it is *Acts 10. 33.* We can say with Cornelius, we are all here present before God, to hear whatsoever things are commanded thee of God: To be in a humble, watchful posture; having the heart laid open to whatsoever God will say; hanging on Him, as the phrase is, *Luke 19. 48.* 4. The sound of the trumpet, is not only to waken to attention; but to put to action: it gives, not only a distinct sound for direction; but it puts to doing: to point at the nature of our Lords voice, and how it ought to be heard. It's not enough to hear, but there would be a suitableness to the voice heard, according as the trumpet sounds distinctly. Folks would hear suitably, and welcome what is said, and conform their practice thereto; taking with convictions, challenges, directions to duties, promises, &c. as the Word giveth them. Therefore the Preaching of the Word, is compared to the sounding of a trumpet, *Isai. 58.* Lift up thy voice like a trumpet, that is, powerfully and distinctly: and, as it suppons some thing on the Ministers side, that he would have his voice trumpet-like; so it suppons some thing on the side of the hearers, that they would conform their practice suitable to it, as Souldiers prepare themselves at the sound of a trumpet, *1 Cor. 14. 8.*

The second circumstance, is the place where, or the manner how he heard the voice; it spoke behind him; it came not as before John; but as it were unawares, surprising him behind him. 1. The more to affect John with the sound, and to make him inquire in it: for, the more surprising a thing be, it affects the more, and wakens up the more desire to enquire in it. 2. That our Lord may even try John how he will carry himself in following the inquiry of the voice; and so to put John to pains to find it out. Therefore, *Isai. 30. 21.* it is said, Thou shalt hear a voice behind thee: partly, to signify that our backs are one God, when he speaks, we are running away from him: partly, to stir us up to turn our face about, as it were, and to enquire after what is spoken.

*Vers. 11.* The third thing, is, the matter spoken: and it con-

tains two things. 1. A description of the Speaker, His Title and Name, *I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last*, the last two words are an exposition of the former two. 2. The Commission John gets, and the direction given him. 1. Generally, To write what he saw. And, 2. More particularly, To send it to the seven Churches. For this Title, we spoke of it before, *vers. 8.*

It is our Lord, asserting His own God-head, as being the first, the beginning of all the Creation of God actively, being of Himself God essential, and giving a beginning and being to all things that exist, *John 1. 3.* All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made; and the last end of all things: not only everlasting Himself, without end; but to whose Honour are all things that have a beginning: He is the ultimate end; they are all for Him.

Quest. why is this Title so often repeated?

Ans<sup>r</sup>. Besides this general, that it is to hold out Christs God-head: therefore, this and other such like Titles, are so often given Him in this Book: which is of excellent use and benefit, to have this born in upon the hearts, and minds of sinners. It is repeated here: 1. That John might know from whom he had this Commission; even from Him, who had power to give him a Commission both to speak and to write; *The first and the last*: a thing that concerns Ministers to know when they come out to Preach the Word, whose Commission they have, that they take not this honour to themselves, nor from men, except in the ordinary way appointed by Him: for except they have Christs Warrant, mans will not Commissionate them to go to Churches and Preach at their own hand. 2. It is also for the Peoples cause, to learn them to take the Word off John's hand. It is not John's word, that cometh to them; but the Word of Alpha and Omega, the first, and the last: And it were good for us so to speak; and good for you so to hear the Word. That same Jesus Christ, that gave John and the Apostles warrant to Preach and Write, it's that same Jesus Christ that sendeth our Pastors and Teachers to Preach; it's He that gives gifts to men for edifying the body, *Eph. 4. 12.* His Warrant to both, is one; and His Authority, Commissionating both, is one, and both are gifts for the Churches good.

The second thing in this *vers.* is, The Commission John gets. 1. In general, to write what he saw. 2. More particularly, to send it to the seven Churches.

1. Write what thou seest: that is, not this Vision only, which thou hast seen; but all the Words and Circumstances which thou hast seen, or shall see and hear: And so it's his first Warrant to write this Revelation, and send it to the Churches: it points at the Authority, on which the written Word is founded; it depends not on men, but on Jesus Christ that gives Warrant to Write: and we should look on the Bible, and every Chapter thereof as by Christs direction written to us.

2. The matter he should write is restricted, write, not every thing that pleaseth thee; but what thou seest: to point out the guiding and inspiration of the Spirit in these holy Men, who were Pen-men of the Scripture; they spake and wrote, as they were inspired and guided by the holy Ghost.

3. It shews, that there is need, and it is requisite, that men have a particular Commission to carry the Word to the People: not only a Commission in general, to write; or to carry the Gospel; but for every particular message. Not that men should be anxious, or perplexed, about their Warrant, or Commission, in an extraordinary way; but to weigh well the Time, Place, Persons, and such Circumstances as may clear their Commission in an ordinary way, there being some things to be written and sent to one Church by Christs Warrant, which are not so to another; every Church hath their particular Message and Commission renewed.



2. More particularly, what he should do with it, when it is written in a Book, *Send it to the seven Churches*, that is, *John* this Revelation is not to ly beside thee; but it's for the benefit of the Church: send it therefore to the seven Churches in *Asia*. 1. Because most famous in that time; and because near to *Patmos*, where he was; and because it's probable *John* had some particular relation to them: and their need presently required it. This Book of the Revelation, is sent for the benefit of the Church: and therefore ought to be welcomed thankfully, as a rich Jewel.

We shewed before, why these Churches were called *seven*, and not the Church in *Asia*, *vers. 4.* and say no more of it now. These Churches are particularly named. We shall not stand on a Geographical description of the Places. *Ephesus* is spoken of at large, *Act. 19. 20.* This Church and *Smyrna*, were in that part of *Asia* the less, called *Ionia*; *Pergamos*, in that part, called *Atolia*; *Thyatira*, *Sardis*, and *Philadelphia*, in *Lydia*; and *Laodicea*, in that part, called *Caira*, or *Caria*: which not being profitable to you to insist upon, we shall take some general considerations from the *VVords*, and so proceed.

And, 1. It would be considered why these Churches, are designed from the name of the Cities wherein they were. *VVe* rather speak a word to this: because we find Churches in the New Testament, named by Towns. It's true, the Churches in *Galatia*, are also named; but most frequently they are named by Cities, as the Church at *Jerusalem*, the Church at *Rome*, the Church at *Corinth*, &c. And *Titus* is to ordain Elders in every City, by *Pauls* appointment: which was for the City; and it's like also, for the edification of these about, God making the Gospel spread from Cities to Countries about, as it is said, The Word spread from *Ephesus* to all *Asia*, though there were other Churches beside these, that were within the Walls of these Towns. The Reasons of this, we conceive to be, 1. Because the Cities, or Towns, were most famous for their populousness; and were well furnished with Officers: and there was most occasion of getting a Harvest of Souls in them, by spreading the Net of the Gospel among them, in respect of which accidental and politic considerations, which belong not to the essence of a Church, some Cities being more famous and able to keep the word of truth, and make it forth-coming to other Churches. It is not unagreeable to Scripture, to have particular respect to Cities, and Churches in them, as they may further the work of the Gospel. 2. Because in these great Cities, and Places of concourse, the Ministers and Officers of the Church, who served in the work of the Lord, and went round in a circuit in the Churches about, had their most ordinary residence, as it would seem; and that their fixed, collegiat meetings and combinations were there. 1. Because we find no particular Congregations mentioned, but only the Church at such a Town written unto, though there was many particular Congregations about; and these Cities kept not the Word within themselves. 2. Where they are mentioned, as the Church at *Jerusalem*: it taketh in not only these within the Walls; but all the Churches in *Judea*: so *Corinth*, takes in *Cenchrea*, &c.

2. Consider those Churches as once given to Idolatry: *Ephesus*, was famous, or rather, infamous for that, *Acts 19.* yet now Christ esteems them all Churches, bestows an Epistle upon them, holding out, 1. His love. 2. The power of His Grace and Gospel. 3. The sovereignty and freeness of His Grace, breaking in on the kingdom of sin and Satan amongst them; and that Christ can win in Churches to Himself, out of the most profane heathenish and Idolatrous cities and people.

3. Consider, These cities are respected by Christ: and it's not because they are cities; but because they are Churches: that which makes them to be preferred before others, is the Churches in them: And this is it that maketh places carry re-

spect with *Jesus Christ* more than all the glancing victories and glory of the world.

4. Consider, them, as they are some of them more, some of them lesse, yet, none of them, are called lesse or more Churches. *Ephesus*, where were many thousands, is but a Church: as *Smyrna*, and other lesser towns are: the reason is, the Scripture goes not upon multitude, and external considerations of that kind; but upon the unitie that is among Ministers, and Officers, which is not affixed to one particular Congregation: and where it is, it makes an union among many, as amongst few; and amongst few, as amongst many.

5. Consider, That the number of these Churches is according to the places where they were fixed, and where the members did inhabit: which shews, Parochial marches by bounds or towns in convenient lying, not unsuitable; but consonant to Scripture: wherefore the Church of *Ephesus*, or, of any certain place, includeth all the Professors living there, they are accounted of that Church and no other, as providence hath put them together: and the Churches are divided as they live sundry. No indweller of *Ephesus*, is accounted of the Church of *Smyrna*, or contrarily; order in this, being, well consistent with the Gospel: and as we will not find mention made in Scripture of two Churches, in one place, what ever the number be, (save when they are after subdivided, as *1 Cor. 14.*) So we will not find any Saint spoken of, as belonging to any Congregation, but as they dwell: and the Church at such a place, and Saints of such a place, are still taken to be of a like extent.

6. Consider, Some of them were more corrupt, others of them were more pure; yet, he writes an Epistle to them all: some hath a name that they are living, when they are dead; some are fallen from their first love; some have in them those that hold the doctrine of the *Nicolaitans*; some are luke-warm, &c. Yet, they are all of them owned as Churches, and written to. 1. Because our Lord looks on them, as having that which made them to have the essence of Visible Churches: and in so far, He gives them the name, though many defects were in them: and therefore intitles them so. He stands not to give *Laodicea* the title of a Church to Him, which many, it may be, would scarcely count worthy the name of Christians. 2. Because our Lords way, is not at first to give up with Churches, and Persons, who are joyned to Him in Church-relations; but to presse upon them to be forth-coming to their obligations: He says not, ye are no Churches; but reckons them Churches: and on that ground, founds His promises, threatnings and directions; and gives them reproofs for what is wrong; and His advice to amend the same: an excellent way of dealing, to have Churches answerable to their obligation, and not to cast them off. Rejection is the last thing used, when neither threatnings, promises reproofs, nor directions have place to do them good. And we may say it on the bye, it is Christs prerogative to remove Candlesticks, and dissolve ties between Him and Churches.

7. Consider, These Churches as they are now, comparing them with what they were once: Golden-Candlesticks; now dens for *Mahomet*: the Godhead of Christ once written of to them; now trampled on. Which shews 1. How doleful a thing it is to despise warnings. 2. To what a high Churches defection may come to: when there is not a healing in time; when falling from the first love is not taken heed to, it may come to make a Church no Church. These Churches were once as glorious as ever *Glasgow* was, and more, *Pam.* writing to sundry of them, and here *John* to them all; yet, for contempt of the Gospel, God breaks the staves of beauty and bands and they are no Churches to Him. Tremble to think upon it.

8. Consider, That *John* now in prison writes: the Church is obliged to *Johns* imprisonment. We now have these writings by the

the Apostles Epistles from their prisons, than we have from their liberty, God making this good use of mans malice.

9. He repeats his commission, not only in generall, but to every Church, as their peculiar message was, that he might bear out his commission in his dealing with them; and that they might know the warrant they had to hear him. Neither Mini-

sters ought to speak, or people to hear, except they be warranted: there is an unwarrantableness in hearing, as there is in speaking, *Prov. 19. 27.* And people would make conscience in hearing, that it be not done indifferently; and there would not be indifferent access for all to Preach, nor for hearing, but as the Lord warrants.

## LECTURE VI.

*Verf. 12. And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks.*

13. *And in the midst of the seven candlesticks, one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.*

14. *His head, and his hairs were white like wooll, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire.*

15. *And his feet like unto fine brasse, as if they burned in a furnace: ———*

**T**He second circumstance, or step, of the first part of the Vision, is what *John* did, *vers. 12.* or his carriage when he heard the voice, spoken of before, *vers. 10.* *I turned to see the voice that spake:* a voice is not properly the object of sight; but it's two ways to be understood. 1. Either *John* turned him, that is, gave pains more clearly to perceive and understand that which was spoken: for, seeing, in Scripture, is often so taken, for a more clear up taking and understanding of a thing: and so the meaning is, *John* having heard the voice behind him, he lends to his ear to take it up better. Or, 2. It may look to *John's* desire, to see him that spake: and so he turned, not to see the voice; but the speaker: and on the back of this, the heavenly Vision is represented to him. *And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks.* Follows what *John* saw upon his turning about; he gets this Vision. Folks that go about the use of the means seriously, minding edification, they readily profit.

Let us speak to that which properly is the Vision. It holds out, or, there are holden forth in it, three things. 1. The Church, is holden out under the similitude of a Candlestick; or, the seven Churches of *Asia*, under the similitude of seven golden Candlesticks: so they are expounded, *vers. 20.* 2. The Ministers of the Churches, are holden out under the similitude of seven Stars, *vers. 16.* So are they expounded in the 20. *vers.* also. We shall forbear any further exposition, or speaking of them, till we come to that place. The main thing in the Vision, is, Our Lord *Jesus*, represented these ways. First, in His Offices. Secondly, in His excellent qualifications for His discharging these Offices. Thirdly, in His care of His Churches, and actually executing of His Offices, and exercising of His qualifications for the good of His Churches and Ministers: He is among the one, walking; and holding the other in His hand; and hath a sword, going out of His mouth, for the good of both.

Quest. 1. *Whether is it Christ that appears and speaks here, or not?* The reason of the doubt, is from *vers. 1.* Where it is said, *Jesus Christ sent and signified these things by his angel.*

Ans. It is He that appears and speaks here to *John*, who gave him the Commission to write: and certainly, it was no Angel that gave *John* Commission to write and send it to the seven Churches; but it is *Jesus Christ*, who intitles Himself before, to be the first and the last: no Angel can give Commission, nor dare take upon him these titles and stiles, but *Jesus Christ* only. 2. It's clear also to be Christ, from the parts of the description, and from the particular charge that Christ is holden

out to have, to wit, in having a care of the Churches, in holding the Stars in His hand, and sending a sword out of His mouth. Who can do these things but Christ? 3. From the seven Epistles, which begin with some part of this description, as belonging to Him: He is still stiled by some part of it, *Chap. 2.* and 3.

Quest. 2. *Whether doth Jesus Christ appear here really in His Man-head? or, Is it only a representation of Him in a Vision, for signifying and holding forth the excellent properties and qualifications that are in Him, as sometime God appeared of old to weak man, condescending to his capacity for his comfort, as Dan. 7. 9. and sometime Christ, as Dan. 10. 5. to which this Vision seemeth to relate?*

Ans. We take it not for any reall apparition of Christ in His Humanity, or as He was Man, conceived in and born of the Virgin *Mary*, crucified, dead and buried, and in that nature risen again and ascended; but we take it only to be a representation, or vision of the glorious properties and qualifications, and stately Majesty of the Son of God, who was, and is, and is to come, the first, and the last: who as He is God, so also was and is Man; but doth not now appear in His Humane nature, but as God. Reason, 1. Because in substance it is the same Vision that we find, *Dan. 7. 9.* and 10. 5. where God, and Christ, as God, are holden out under the same expressions: and if these expressions cannot be applied in these places to signify the parts of a Humane body (which God hath not, for He is a Spirit) there can be no reason why the same expressions here, should be applied to the parts of a body. 2. It's clear also, if we look to the end, which *Jesus Christ* hath before Him in this representation: He being to direct seven Epistles to the seven Churches in *Asia*, He sets out Himself by some excellent properties, to ground the faith of His People, and move them to reverence, receive, and give obedience to what He writes unto them. 3. Look through all this Vision, it cannot be applied literally; the seven Churches, cannot be seven Candlesticks; the seven Ministers, cannot be seven Stars, &c. but it's to evidence the excellent qualifications that are in Christ, under these representations: and therefore what some would draw from this, or other representations of this kind, concerning Christ's Body on earth, or the ubiquitie of His Humanity, or bodily presence with His Churches, or, for portraiting of His Body (as *Winkelmannus* and other *Lutherans* alledged) hath no ground from this place; but rather the just contrary: if Christ appeared after His Ascension, no other wayes than He did before His Incarnation,



on, He would take away all carnall thoughts of His bodily presence on earth. 4. It is said, *One like unto the Son of Man*: and this holds out, He was not indeed Man in this Vision; but appeared to John, as He did to Daniel; some way representing Himself so. But, 5. The application and exposition of many of these expressions, Chap. 2. and 3. holding forth His eyes, to signifie His Omniscience and the like, will shew the absurdity of this. But come to the three parts of the description, more particularly: wherein, as we said, 1. We have his Offices and Authority. 2. His qualifications for executing these Offices. 3. His care of His Churches, and His actual executing of His Offices, and exercising of His qualifications for the good of them, and His Ministers.

First, His Offices and Authority are represented; His Kingly and Priestly Princely Offices, under His Garments; His Prophetical Office, by the Sword that proceedeth out of His mouth.

Long garments, were especially used by two sorts of Persons, Kings and Priests. *Exod. 28. 29.* Aaron, the high Priest, and His Sons, have holy Garments appointed them; and the high Priest was to have a long Robe curiously sewed and embroidered: so also, long Garments, were for a signe of Authority and reverence; and Christ casts that up to the Scribes and Pharisees, *Mat. 23. 5.* *Mark 12. 38.* And Christ was clothed with a purple Robe; which was a speciall Robe, designing great men from others, though they did it in derision to Him.

He is girt about the paps with a golden girdle. A girdle hath two uses, 1. It was used for neatening the long Robe; for binding it up, that it might not be cumbersome to men in their employment, *Luk. 17. 8.* *Gird thyself and serve me.* 2. A golden girdle signifieth Authority and Eminence; so the girdles of Kings signified, *Isa. 22. 21.* when Eliakim is constituted a Ruler, it is said, *I will cloath him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle:* and what is meant by that, is expounded in the following words, *I will commit the Government into his hand, and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah, and I will lay the key of the house of David upon his shoulder: he shall open, and none shall shut, &c.* This girdle of Christ's is spoken of, *Isa. 11. 5.* *Righteousnesse shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.*

The expression holdeth out these three things, which we conceive to be understood by it. 1. The Authority and warrantableness of our Lord Jesus Christ His Kingly and Princely Office, as that which followeth, doth of His Prophetical Office: hereby letting us know, that our Lord Jesus His being in heaven and in glory, hath not made Him lay by His Offices, or the executing of them; but He remains King and Priest for ever, *Psal. 110.* even in heaven He bears His Offices to His Churches. 2. That our Lord Jesus Christ, not only bears these Offices; but, in an excellent and glorious manner: there is no such King, no such Priest, no such Prophet as He: so that whatsoever belongs to any of His Offices, or any part of any of them, He would have His people looking to Him as eminent therein: He is a King ruling in Righteousnesse, stately in Majesty and dominion; a Priest, that continueth for ever, and hath an unchangeable Priesthood; and, is able to save all them, to the uttermost, that come unto God by Him; seeing He lives for ever to make intercession for them: and, such an high Priest becomes us, who is holy, and harmlesse, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, *Heb. 7. 24, 25, 26.* He is a Prophet, such as hath no equal: none teacheth like Him. Therefore it becometh us not only, not to have low thoughts of Christ, as bearing those Offices; but to think of Him as being eminent and glorious in them, and all that concerns them. 3. It holds out, that our Lord Jesus His stateliness and glory, doth not marr, nor hinder Him in the application of His Offices, and executing them for the good of His Church: but, for as stately as He is, for Authori-

ty, having on His long robe, and being girded with a girdle; yet, His garment is so truced and girded, as He is fitted for His employment, and to make use of His Offices, for the benefit of souls (See *John 13. v. 3.*) as ever He did when He was on earth. Christ's greatnesse and glory, is so far from unfitting Him for the discharge of His Offices, that He hath robes compacted, and Himself so fitted, as He may handfomly go about the discharge of them, being still girded, though the girdle be of gold.

The second part of the description, *vers. 14.* is His qualifications for His Offices, set out under the particular parts of a body, First, *Head and His hair were like wool*: this would not agree to Christ's Manhead in all appearance, He not having come to that age, at which men use to become white-haired. It is an application of, or an allusion to that of *Dan. 7. 9.* if not taken out of it. And the reason of the allusion, is, to set out, 1. The Eternitie of Christ's Godhead: that though He was, and is Man; yet, before the world was, He was, and is the Eternal God, without beginning, that whitenesse of the hair, being spoken of God, to set out His Eternity: He is not from yesterday, as poore creatures are; but from everlasting, though His Eternity maketh no change nor alteration on Him, as age doth on men. 2. It sets out our Lord Jesus His wisdom and experience, and the reverence that is due to Him: He is set out as one having gray hairs, being eminently endued with wisdom and experience, as old men use to be in comparison of others, and as these of younger years usually are not. Therefore, *Dan. 7. 9.* He is called, *the ancient of dayes*, which expounds His appearing with white hairs. *Isa. 11. 2.* *The Spirit of the Lord rests upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord.*

The second part of this qualification, is, in His eyes: *His eyes were as a flame of fire.* He is also thus set forth, *Dan. 10. 6.* These eyes, point out the omniscience of Christ, who, as God, sees every thing: and they are said to be as a flame of fire, partly, because of their peircing nature: that as all things are naked before Him and bare; so He sees throughly, in through and out through them all. All things are lying open, and, as it were, imbowelled before His eyes, *Heb. 4.* And, partly, because of the dreadfulness, and terribleness that will arise from His omniscience to the wicked of the world: His, and His Churches enemies, nothing will be more terrible to them, nor a glance of Christ's eye, whereby he can destroy worlds of them, as when he looked down on Sodom and Gomorrah, fire and brimstone followed His eye, and destroyed them.

The third part of His description, is *vers. 15.* *His feet like unto fine brasse*: this is excellent brasse, glittering brasse, nearest unto gold, as being some way mixed with it: and these feet of brasse, point out not only His power, but especially His wayes, counsels, and dispensations toward His people in ordering of His Churches, Gods paths and wayes being the manner of His guiding of the World, So Christ's feet do signifie His stepping up and down in His Church, ordering all things well, wisely, and holily to His glorious ends: and consequently, His dispensations, whereby He makes His presence manifest among His People. 2. These feet, are said to be like unto fine brasse, as if they burned in a furnace: to point out, 1. That all His dispensations are pure and perfect. 2. Excellent and firm, solide and durable: there is no prevailing by the gates of hell against them. They are pure, spotless and clean: no iniquity is in them, *Deut. 32. 4.* *He is the Rock, His work is perfect*: for, all His wayes are judgement: a God of Truth, and without iniquity, just and right is He. We think this to be the meaning here: His wayes in His Church, His stepping up and down in it, are pure and spotless, firm and solide: all on-lookers cannot mark a spot in them; they cannot be mended, or bettered, nor hindered, He so sickly sets them down. It serves to hold forth the stateliness of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to bring our hearts to

to a holy awe and reverence of Him; O, that folks knew what He were, they would walk in more awe and reverence, before and with Him, who is such a stately Person! Love, reverence, and admire Jesus: there is no such stately and lovely Person in the

World; submit to Him, He will do no wrong: Contend not with Him: for, on He will go, so sickly sets He down His steps, like pillars of brass. The reasons of these expositions, will appear more, in the Inscriptious of the Epistles, chap. 2. and 3.

## LECTURE VII.

Verf. 15. ----- *And his voice as the sound of many waters.*

16. *And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the Sun shineth in his strength.*

**I** Told you, that this Vision doth not represent the Body of our Lord Jesus, or His humane nature; but it is to point out His divine qualifications, wherewith He was furnished as God-Man in one Person, for the good of His Church. And these things spoken of, as parts of a body, bear out some resemblance and analogie of these qualifications, that are in Him, far beyond any thing that can be conceived.

The fourth property or qualification, is, *his voice*: which is said to be *as the sound of many waters*. It was said in the 10. verf. to be *a great voice, like a trumpet*; here it is said to be *like the sound of many waters*, both high and great, heard afar off, and very terrible and dreadful. By His *voice*, in Scripture is understood mainly two things: both which may well relate to this resemblance. 1. His effectual willing and commanding of things to be, as it is said, *He spoke and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast*, (Gen. 1.) *Let there be light, and it was light*: for, Christ as God, hath not a voice properly; but the voice, being that by which a man signifies his command and will, and being here attributed to Christ as God, It is to point out His effectual willing, and bringing that forth which He would have done: and so points at the effectualness of Christs government. There is nothing called for by Him, but it cometh to pass; nothing commanded, but is done, and that with a word. 2. It is taken for the manifestation of Gods terrible-ness and majesty, Psal. 18. 13. *The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the highest gave His voice: hail-stones and coals of fire*. In which sense, it is applied to the thunder: because, by it He manifests His power, and shews Himself terrible. Hence there is so much spoken of His *voice*, Psal. 29. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. *The voice of the Lord, &c.* To shew not only the powerful effects of the voice of God in the thunder, and the way it produceth its effects; but the terrible-ness and majesty of God who hath such a voice, that, as it is Hag. 2. 6. *Can shake heaven and earth*: which is to point out His dreadful-ness and terrible-ness, against the enemies of His Church. If He speaks the word, they vanish: one word of this King will make the stoutest Tyrants to quake, as is clear from Scripture, and the story of the former times.

A fifth qualification, is, *vers. 16. He had in his right hand seven stars*. The seven Stars are expounded in the last *vers.* to be the Ministers of the Churches. And the reasons of it we forbear, till we come to that: onely here, our Lord Jesus is said to have a *right hand*, that is, power, and skill, and activity in exercising His power: for, the right hand, is the strongest hand, and that by which men skilfully, and dexterously go about the bringing to pass of that which they would be at: He hath not power and fury, but power and skill; and with power and skill He manages all His matters. Believers have not a handless Mediator, (to speak so) He hath hands, as well as feet. But more of this in the third thing, contained in this description.

Sixthly, He is described further, *Out of his mouth went a two-edged sword*: whereby is meant the Word of God, especially the Gospel: His *voice*, spoken of before, is more general, relating to His universal power and sovereignty over all the World: This relates more particularly, to the written and Preached Word, called *The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God*, Ephes. 6. and *sharper then a two-edged sword, dividing betwixt the joints and the marrow, the soul and the spirit, and is a discern-er of the thoughts and intents of the heart*, Heb. 4. The Word is compared to a sword, and a two-edged sword, for these reasons, 1. Because of the power of it: it hath a discerning, piercing, penetrating power with it, to come in on hearts; and to discover the thoughts and intents of the heart, when Christ blesteth it, and maketh it strike at the roots of corruption, it will humble the proudest heart, and quicken the dearest spirit, and pierce through the Soul and Conscience of the most obdured person, as Act. 2. *Peters Preaching did prick his hearers*. This is the saving and proper effect of the Word, when it Anatomizes folks, and layeth open their thoughts, their security, pride, formality, &c. and strikes at the root of the body of death, to kill it, and be its death. 2. Because of the effect it hath among carnal hearers and hypocrites: in which respect, we think it is especially looked on here, as afterwards in the Epistle to Pergamos, Chap. 2. *vers. 12, 16. I will fight against them with the sword of my mouth*. This sword, when rightly handled, proves a torture to the wicked men in the world, when it discovers their rottenness: so it's said of the two faithful Witnesses, Rev. 11. 10. *that they tormented them that dwell on the earth*; the Word of God was so sharp in their mouths, that it did *hew* (Hos. 6. 5.) their minds and consciences, and galled them at the heart; so (Act. 7.) it is said, *Stephens hearers were cut in their hearts, and gnashed upon him with their teeth*; they could not abide the plainness and evidence of the Word, accompanied with power. 3. Because it hath a further cutting vertue to wicked men, when it proves through Gods Justice, plaguing to their hearts and minds; and hath an instrumental efficacy for their slaying, when God draws out the sentence, and gives the Word an edge, and makes it cut, and, in His Justice, to promote their destruction, Isai. 11. 4. *With the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked*, 1 King. 19. 17. *Him that escapeth the sword of Jehu, shall Elisha slay*: and Hos. 6. 5. *I brewed them by my Prophets, and slew them by the words of my mouth, through Gods pronouncing of sharp threatnings, and their corruption abusing the threatnings, it becomes their death*. 2. This sword, is said to proceed out of his mouth: to point out where-from the force, efficacy, and power of the Word cometh, when it pierceth: It's not the Word, as it is written, or spoken by mens mouth; but as it proceedeth out of Christs mouth, which makes it profitable or convincing: and it is this which makes sinners guilt so great, and tormenteth hypocrites when He addeth weight with it, to thwart their corruption, and they repine against it.



The last qualification, is, *His countenance was as the Sun shining in his strength*: whereby is meant the love that He sheweth to His People, and the Glory and Majesty that is in Himself, *Psal. 4. 6. Lord lift up the light of thy countenance upon us*, that is, the manifestation of thy love. And *Psal. 80. the causing of His face to shine*, is several times spoken of. And this favour and stately Majesty in Christ, is compared to the Sun shining: not as in the morning, nor at even, nor under a cloud; but in his strength. 1. Because of the glorious majesty that is in it, as *Chap. 5. 15. of the Song, His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars*: there is an excellency and beauty in it that dazzles and obscures all the excellency and beauty of the World, even as the light of the Sun obscures the Stars. 2. Because of the lightfulness of it: for, Christ is to Believers, as the Sun is to the World, *Joh. 1. 9. He is that true light, that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world. Light*, both for direction and consolation: and that is a third reason of the similitude. *His countenance is as the Sun shining in his strength*, for the refreshingness of it. *Psal. 4. 6, 7. His countenance maketh the heart more glad than Corn, and Wine, and worldly comforts whatsoever.* 4. His countenance is so compared, from the effectual influence it hath on Believers growth: even as the Sun hath influence on the growing of Corns, Grasse, Trees, Herbs, and all things in the inferiour World: so Christs countenance hath influence on Believers growth in all things. Therefore, *Mal. 4. 2. It's said, The Sun of righteousness shall arise with healing under His wings to such as fear His Name, and they shall go forth and grow up as calves in the stall.* His presence and favour, hath a real and effectual influence on all that are united to Him, as the Sun in his strength, hath on herbs and plants. We point but at these things, which are infinite in themselves. O that necessity of union with Christ! O the excellency of that condition, of being near to Him! He is our light: there is no living without Him: and how lightsome is it, to walk with Him, and to dwell in Him?

The third thing in the description, is, Christs actual exercising of His Offices and qualifications for the good of His Churches and Ministers (which are the objects about which His care is especially exercised) holden out in these two. 1. He walks among the golden Candlesticks. And, 2. He keeps the Stars in His right hand, that is His Work and great employment, as *vers. 13, 16; and chap. 2. vers. 1.*

1. His walking among the golden Candlesticks, points out, 1. His special presence in His Church: though He be omnipresent through all the World; yet He hath a special manifestation of His presence in His Church: and there is a special relation between Him and them, as it's spoken of Israel, *Psal. 147. 19. compared with Deut. 4. 7. What Nation so great that hath God so near them in all things, &c?* He is near to His Church in a singular manner, in the special effects of His presence. 2. It points out His special care of His Church; He chooseth His Church as the pleasantest place in all the World to walk in; and He taketh pleasure there, as in His Garden and Gallery: His common providence is extended to all the World; but He taketh special notice, and hath a special care of His Church above all the World. *Isai. 27. 3. I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day, See Isai. 43. 3, 4.* 3. It points out His special taking notice of, and observing the carriage of His Church and of all within the same: He knoweth all the World, and the thoughts, words, and actions of every one, all projects, counsels, and events before they come; but in a special manner He taketh notice of all His Church, how the Work of Grace thriveth in His people; what fruit His Ordinances have among them, who are making progress, who are back-sliding, what is the particular posture of every soul, to sned off luxuriant branches, to purge out what is corrupt, to help forward what is right, to prevent any preju-

dice may come unto them: to fore-see and provide for any thing, as it may be for their good. Which shews, 1. What a great benefit it is to be a Member of this Church: if it be a mercy to be under His special and singular care, it must be no small privileged and benefit to be a Member of His Church. 2. It letteth us see what manner of persons we ought to be, who have Christs presence so near us, nearer than all the world beside: when ever we are in the Ordinances, we would take up Christ, as walking amongst the midst of us; and in all our conversation, apprehend Him at our ear: it both calls for holiness from us, and layeth watchfulness on us, knowing how narrowly He taketh notice of us. 3. It points out, how inexcusable, the faults and failings of these who live in the Church, are. Christ walks among them; and yet they stand not awe of Him: the signs of His presence are alwayes with them; and yet they take no notice of them: the nearer the signs of His presence, and His special care be, the greater is our sin, if it have not influence on us. 4. It points at Christs tenderness and care, for the comfort of them that dare not trust themselves, but commit themselves to Him and trust to His care and tenderness: He seeth well to all His Churches, and every particular persons condition; and is never from them: His being in heaven, hath not made Him to lay by His care of His people. This were a great consolation, if we would singly make use of it. *Matth. 28. 20, I am with you to the end of the world;* and He keeps His promise.

The other word, *His holding the Stars in His right hand*, holds out His care of His Ministers: the meaning is; that as He walks in the midst of the Churches, and takes special care of them; so He takes a special care of the Ministers of these seven Churches, and so of the Ministers of all the Churches. And under this is holden out, 1. The difficulty of the Ministers station: they are not able to stand their alone, except they be upholden by Christ: partly, because of the malice and opposition of men, and Devils that by wicked men seek to ruine and overturn the Church and Work of God in their hands; the venting of their malice begins at them: and partly, because of the greatness of the burden and charge, that lies on them: and partly, also from their own infirmities, &c. 2. It points out the Lords special care of them, according to their station, strait, and charge: as their charge is great, and their difficulties great and many; so He exercises His power for their direction, defence and protection: He hath care of all the World; but more especially of His Churches: but for His Churches sake, He hath, most of all, a special care of His Ministers, who are called the Messengers of the Churches and the Glory of Christ, *1 Cor. 8. they being the men that He makes use of for the handling of His Sword, and subduing of souls to Him.* They often meet with little estimation from men, and walk among many snares and dangers: therefore He holds out His care, and the application of His power, especially, to encourage and strengthen them to duty in the midst of these snares and difficulties. 3. By *His holding them in His right hand*, he points at that dependency that Ministers ought to have on Jesus Christ: they should go about their duty, as in His hand; lippingen to His strength and power, rather than to ought in themselves, for the performing of the task committed to them.

1. This is for special consolation in evil times, that Christ hath such a care of His Ministers and Churches: let the Devil pluck again and again to have a Ministry down, sometimes by force, sometimes by slight, it will not be, they are stars, and in Christs hand: sooner will stars be plucked from heaven, than they from Him.

2. Christs care of His Church, kyths in caring for His Ministers: The right care of the one, is carried along with the right care of the other; and it's not a right care of Churches, where there is not a respect to Ministers: Christ knoweth the good and

and the ill of the one, stands and falls with the good and ill of the other: there is such a connexion between them, and such a fitness, they are so interessed the one in the other, that according as the one is, so is the other: ordinarily, if the Minister be carnal and secure; so is the flock: and if the Minister be in a lively temper; there will also be some life among the flock. And if we speak in reference to those who have enmity at the Church, hatred against the Church is vented, and beginneth at hatred against the Ministry. It is impossible to be careful of Christs Church, and despise

and hate His Ministers, or overturn a Ministry.

3. It shews, that there is a respect due to them that Christ puts in this place: and where Christ hath put respect, it becometh us to put respect also: there should be a sympathy with them, and a reverencing of them, if it were for no more but for this cause, that he *keeps them in His right hand*: respect to Him, should make respect to them: It's a strange Religion, to profess respect to Churches and Saints, and show so little to Ministers: Christ did never so.

## LECTURE VIII.

Verf. 17. *And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead: and he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not, I am the first and the last.*

18. *I am he that liveth, and was dead: and behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen. -----*

**Y**E have heard of this Vision, which John saw: the Lord beginneth with it at the entry of this task of writing this Book of the Revelation, to imprint on him a stamp and impression of His own excellency, as a preparation and fitting of him for the Work; even as He began with *Isaiah*, chap. 6. and with *Ezekiel* chap. 1. Bearing out, by these Visions, a representation of His Glory and Majesty, thereby to fit and qualify them for their duty: for, they are fittest to bear Gods message, and to describe Him to others, that are thus prepared, and qualified, and have some reverence and awe of God imprinted on their own hearts.

From the 17. verf. and forward to the end, we have some consequents, that followed this Vision, or, some circumstances for the edification of the Church, for clearing of the Vision before mentioned, and for making way for John's writing of what he saw. And they are four in number. 1. The effect, which the Vision had on John, in the beginning of verf. 17. for as stately and lovingly as Jesus Christ represented Himself, he could not bear it; but faints when he sees Him, and he falls at His feet as dead. 2. A consolation proposed by our Lord to John, which hath several steps, in the latter part of verf. 17. and 18. wherein as John kythed weakness, so Christ kythed much love, tenderness, and skilfulness in applying an effectual remedy, for curing the distemper John was into. 3. A repetition of John's Commission and Warrant to write, verf. 19. And 4. An explication of that part of the Vision, concerning the meaning of the seven golden Candlesticks, and the Stars, verf. 20.

1. *And when I saw him, I fell down at his feet as dead*, This is the first consequent or effect of the vision. *I fell down as dead*: that is: I was benumbed (as it were) and dammished with the sight of the excellent Majesty and Glory that I saw in Him, and I was put out of capacity to act the acts of body or mind, as if I had been dead; I could no more exercise, or act the acts of a living man, than a dead man can, as *Daniel*, Chap. 10. 8, 9. And it hath been often seen in the best of Gods Children, when more than ordinary representations of God have been let forth, they have become as dead men, unfit for action. And it proceeds from two grounds. 1. From the exceeding great distance, that is betwixt the infinite Majesty of God, and finite creatures: the brightness of the Glory, Excellency, and Majesty of God the Creator, burdeneth and overburdeneth the weakness and infirmity of the best of creatures: for, if the eyes of creatures be that weak, that they cannot

look on the Sun, what wonder that flesh and blood is not able to look on the Sun of Righteousness. This new wine, is too strong for our old bottels. 2. From the fear of a begun quarrel, and grounds of a continued quarrel then apprehended, making not only a disproportion, through infirmity, betwixt the Majesty of God and the creature, which is so many ways defective to comprehend Him; but also making a disconformity through sin, and so a fear to appear before Him: which makes the creature fear undoing, as in *Isai. 6. Who is me, I am undone; for I am a man of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the Lord of hosts*: For, though before the Fall, when God and Adam were friends, he could have endured God to speak to him; yet, after the Fall, the appearance of God is terrible unto him: when he hears His voice, he is afraid, and runs and hides himself. And there is some thing of this fear, that sticketh to the best; a fear that riseth from the sight of sin, which nearness to God doth discover. And it's like that some thing of both these grounds were in John, as may be gathered from our Lords application of the remedy, and the grounds whereupon He goes in comforting him, *He layeth his hand on him, and strengthens him, and saith, fear not, &c.* Whereby it seemeth. 1. John conceived, from a distemper of mind, Christ would reckon with him, and with Peter, *Luke 5. 8.* fears (as a sinful and profane person in his own account) his being so near such a Glorious and holy Majesty. And 2. This distemper of mind kyths, and hath influence on his body, and maketh him fall down at His feet: not out of reverence, to worship Him; but being overswayed with the excessiveness of fear, that mastered and overcame him, he cannot stand up, but falleth down as dead.

1. This sets out to us the great disproportion, that is betwixt creatures and the Majesty of God: the beloved Disciple John, cannot stand before Him when he kyths; but falleth down as dead. *Isai. 40. 15, 17. and 41. 11, 12, 24.* All Nations are as nothing before Him, or as the dust in the ballance; a little nearness to God, should leave a stamp of humility, and an impression of the Majesty and excellency of God upon us. This is one of the fountain Graces, humility, and a holy awe of the Majesty of God: and this is the way to come to it, to get a right sight of that excellent Majesty that is in Him. 2. Reverence and admire Gods wise and well ordered, governing of this World, especially these things that concern his Church and People. Wonder that God hath carved out such a way in the Works of Creation and Providence, and in the dispensation of the Gospel, and mysteries of Salvation suitable to our weak-



weakness; and so as there may be communion kept with Him, *Job 26. 9.* It is made one of the stately steps of His power, that He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it: He draweth the vail of the Firmament before His Throne, to keep His Glory from breaking forth, and earing up men: And in the dispensation of the Gospel, He hath chosen the Ministry of weak men, to reveal His mind by them to us: and speaketh not immediately Himself; because we could not endure it: if ye heard Him once speak, as He did on mount Sinai, ye would say as Israel did, *Let not God speak to us lest we die.* And this way of revealing Himself, should be so far from making us cast at it, that it should make us wonder at His condescendency in hedging up of Himself (as it were) for our good. 3. It lets us see how much we are in His reverence, that deals so tenderly with us, when a little glimpse of His Glory, a looking of His eye, a drawing by of the vail, would kill us, and make us as if we had never been. 4. It sheweth us also, that humility and reverence even in the best of Gods People, is often ready to degenerate into servile fear and discouragement. The worshipping of Jesus Christ in humble reverence, was a duty called for from *John*; yet this distemper of excessive fear was not called for: such is our weakness, and the slipperiness of our walking, that hardly can we keep the right path; but deviate to one side or other: our faith is ready to degenerate into presumption; and our humility to fainting and despondency of spirit; and our fear, to discouragement, heartlessness, and distrust; our corruption is ready to abuse any thing: for though there be no excess in these graces; Yet there may be in us excess in the exercise thereof, by reason of the corruption which is in us.

The 2. thing, is Christs tender care of *John* under this fit: when he falls at his feet as dead, He comforts him: and this is set down in three steps. 1. He laid his right hand upon him, as a sign of His kindliness, for his encouragement. 2. Giveth him a general word of exhortation, for his comfort, *fear not.* 3. He giveth him three general grounds why he should not fear, to support his faith. *Observe*, in general, Our Lord Jesus His exceeding tenderness of folks, especially in their fits of fainting and discouragement, which ariseth through their mistaking, or wrong uptaking of Him. First, It points at the exceeding tenderness and effectualness of His care, that on the back of this fit, layeth on his hand, and saith, *fear not*; that taketh him at this nick of his distemper, and raiseth him. Secondly, what is the great ground of consolation that is proposed, it is a holding forth of Himself, *I am the first and the last.* And it lets us see when folks scares at Christ, and discourages and faints through their mistaking of Him, there is no such way of curing that distemper and mistake, as by a right uptaking of Him. The Note hath these two branches. 1. That the great ground of our mistaking of Christ, is our ignorance of Him, in his Offices and worth. 2. That the right curing of that mistake, is the right knowledge and uptaking of Him. 3. It says this, that when souls are fainting and discouraged, Christ is both the Cure and the Curer: He must lay on his hand, and speak the word: he is the Cure that is applyed, and the Physician that applyeth it; he toucheth, and speaketh, and the Cure followeth. This also sheweth. 1. That there are some kind of bodily exercises, that arise from a distemper of the mind, that so faints and weakeneth the body, that none can cure but Christ: and this of discouragement and fainting, is, one. 2. It sheweth to Believers their necessity of having the word out of Christs mouth for their encouragement, ere they can shake off discouragement: He hath gotten the tongue of the Learned, to speak a word in season to the weary soul: if He were more waited on in Ordinances; and if the word were taken as from his mouth; we should come better speed than we do, and profit more by the Ordinances. 3. More

particularly, His right hand is his Power: and His laying on *John*, is not any personal touch; but an inward strengthening and up-stirring, as *Daniel*, *Dan. 10. 10.* Behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees, that is, some power for my strengthening and comfortable up-stirring. And *Psal. 138. 3.* David saith, In the day when I cried, thou answeredst me: and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul, which is the communicating of inward strength, to keep him unsinking under the sad condition he was in. 1. It points out what our need is: our weakness and discouragement is often such, that we have need not only of comfort, but of strength. 2. It points at Christs way of dealing with souls, that will sometimes strengthen, ere He comfort: first lay on his hand, and then let the word of comfort, *fear not*, come behind; He seeth this meet, and it's a main evidence of Christs tenderness, faithfulness and wisdom, that takes this way with his People.

The second step of Christs care, is, His saying, *fear not*: a word that is often used and repeated in the Prophets, especially, *Isai. 41. 43, 44,* and *55. Chapters.* *Obf. 1.* There is an excessive fear that God alloweth not in His People: Every thing that passeth for fear and humility, should not be admitted. Christ saith to *John*, *fear not*: which hath three marks from his experience. 1. It's a degenerating fear that breeds mistakes of Christ, and scares them at him; that weakens and faints them in their fellowship with him. Christ alloweth not *John's* fear to the marring of that. 2. It maketh folks incapable of hearing or receiving a message from Christ: so that when he speaketh, they are benumbed, senseless and dead; having ears, but hear not: and it locketh them so up, that no word taketh hold of them. Christ alloweth not this in *John*. 3. It disables, obstructs and marreth in the discharge of that duty that Christ calls to. When *John* is called to write the Vision, he falleth as dead: therefore, Christ saith, *fear not*; but rise up and write: thou art called to reverence and fear me; but to such a fear as may stand well with thy duty, and further thee, and doth not hinder thee in it. And we would learn not to fear, in so far as it works any of these effects. *Obf. 2.* When fear exceeds, degenerates, and groweth excessive in these three spoken of, our Lord alloweth it no more than he doth proud security: only Jesus Christ, is much more tender of Souls under the one, nor He is under the other; yet, let us not please our selves in these excessive fits, as if we were in no hazard. *Obf. 3.* It saith that folks would be tender in dealing with souls under such distempers, knowing there is a great difference betwixt these, who are under carnal presumption, and others, under fainting.

The third Step of Christs care, is, in giving *John* grounds of consolation to warrant his faith: and they are three. The first, is from his own God-head, *I am the first and the last*: I am God that speaks to thee; I was before the world, and will continue when the world shall be ended, the eternal God, a singular property of God, and a demonstration of Christs God-head: therefore would he say, thou needest not fear, *John*: I am not an enemy, nor a stranger, or terrible spirit; but God: and that may sustain one in friendship with God: and it is also a proof, that the Vision before, was a Vision of Christ as God.

2. The second ground, is, the union of His God-head and Man-head, in one Person; and His suffering in His Man-head; united to His God-head, *I am he that liveth, and was dead: and behold I am alive for evermore.* In the Original, it is otherwise, and better for the understanding of the words, *I am the living, and I was made dead, and behold, I live for evermore.* I am the living, that is, I am the living God, who had life from all Eternity of my self, and gave life to all creatures that have life, as it is, *John 5. 26.* As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself: and I that was, and

and is this living God, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, *was made dead, that is, I became Man, was made of a Woman, made under the Law, Gal. 4.* pointing out the true Mediator (God-Man in one Person.) His taking on the nature of man; and satisfying the Justice of God, in under-going the wrath of His Father; and in subjecting Himself to the death of the Croffe, for the sins of His own Elect: both Natures are joyned in one Person; yet, it was not as God that he died, though the Person that was God, died. *And behold, I live for evermore, Amen.* In as far as I was once dead, as Man, now I am alive, and shall live for evermore. And this last expression, hath two words put to it, to point out its excellency. 1. *Behold, I live:* pointing at his Resurrection, and the consolation that flows from Believers; I have overcome death, and live; and so I live, as I shall live for ever, for the benefit of Believers in me. That is of special consolation to us, our life being linked to Christs life, who is God-man and our Mediator: because He lives, we shall live also, *John 14. 19.* His life is a pledge and pawn of ours. 2. *Amen, or Verily:* an asseveration to confirm the truth of His Resurrection, and to put all the world out of doubt of His living, not only as God, but as God and Man in one Person. Be assured ye have a living Christ.

The third ground, is, *And I have the keys of hell and death:* to point out His absolute sovereignty, as Mediator in the state of Humiliation, and Exaltation: therefore fear not, *John,* for I have the Keys of hell, and ordereth even what concerns them. The keys, are the sign of Government, *Isai. 22. 21.* It's spoken of *Eliakim*, a type of Christ, *I will commit the Government into his hand:* and then follows, *The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder.* The meaning is, I have absolute sovereignty and dominion over heaven and hell; I deliver and carry to heaven whom I please, none go there, but those whom I take in: and hell prevaileth not, at its own will; but is under my dominion: for, I have supream power over hell and death: Not that Christs dominion is limited to these; but, because hell and death are the two things that Believers most fear. He tells that they need not fear them: for they are both his Vassals: the devil bears not the keys; but He bears them Himself. These are the grounds of consolation, that are given to *John*: and they are strengthening grounds of faith and salvation to all Believers.

*Observe, 1.* Our Lord Jesus, is God; the first and the last; He that was born of the Virgine *Mary*: and so a true Man, is God. He that was crucified, dead and buried, is God. This is one of the Articles of our Faith: and this place of Scripture, is to be looked on, as a proof of it, against all the most cavilling enemies of our Lords Deity: He that died, was, and is, the first and the last; and the incommunicable Attributes of the God-head agree to Him.

2. This is proposed, as a ground of consolation to *John* and all Believers. And it hath a world of consolation in it, as 1. Not only that there is a God; but that our Lord Jesus Christ, is God; and that, notwithstanding His being God, yet He hath loved sinners so well, that He took on mans nature; and in that nature, died for them; and that He, who woos sinners, and offers to marry them, is God, and yet is very tender to them and of them: which is no small consolation. And it sheweth also, that He is faithful and powerful to perform His Promise to Believers: for there is not a design of enemies laid from the beginning to this day; but He hath a hand

beyond it. 2. That folks may expect good of God: seeing Christ is God, can Believers look for hard dealing from Him? He is absolute in his Sovereignty and dominion, yet swaying it for the good of Believers. What would folks have more for a ground of consolation in times of confusion, than this? let the World go as it will, our Lord Jesus, is God, and wisely orders all. 3. It saith this, that folks when their discouragements prevail, as they are ready to mistake Christ, so they are ready to reflect on His God-head, as if he were not faithful, or powerful, or wise, or tender enough. 4. The solid cure of fear and fainting, is, to be acquainted with Christ as God: the ignorance of Christ is the ground of their being anxious, impatient, and dammed with faithless fears, *1 John 5. 4, 5.*

From the second ground, *I am living, and was dead, Observe, 1.* That this Eternal Son of God became Man, else He could not have died; he that was God, was also true Man: and this is another ground of our Faith, or, a confirmation of an Article of it. 2. That Jesus Christ, in his Man-head, satisfied Justice: for He was dead, he laid down his life, and that willingly: *No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down, and take it up again.* 3. That Jesus Christ is God and Man, having two distinct natures in one Person; For, in the one Nature, He is living: and in the other Nature, He that was living became dead; yet it's but one Person, that was both living and dead: some things (as is ordinary) are attributed to the Person, that agree but to one of the Natures, as, (*Acts 20. 28.*) God is said to have purchased His Church with His own Blood; not that the God-head could suffer, but He that was God, suffered: so of the Man Christ, it may be said, that He is Omnipotent, yet not as man, but the Person that was, and is Man, is Omnipotent: so the Person that is God, died, though not as God, but in respect of His Humane Nature, and as He was Man. These phrases from Christs own mouth, do both clear, and confirm our Faith.

*And behold, I am alive for evermore.* Then 1. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who died once, shall die no more. 2. He who died out of love to his people, is risen and exalted to heavenly glory and dignity, and bears the Office of Mediator, for the consolation of His people for evermore. 3. His Exaltation maketh Him no less mindful, nor less affectionate, and tender of Believers in Him: For, *John* might have thought, that now there was a distance and dryness come in between Christ and Him, especially considered as God; but He tells *John*, He liveth for His comfort: and that he may expect, that He who gave life to all, and laid down His life for him, and other Believers, would be tender of him and of his life.

Which letteth us see, 1. That the price of Believers Redemption, is paid. 2. That it is paid by a Brother, that had a humane nature, and was like us in all things except sin. 3. That Christ, who is God, is also Man; and that, to put us in a capacity of living. 4. See here Christs Resurrection and victory over death; so that the bargain is compleated and finished: and consequently, that Believers shall rise and live for ever through Him. Every word here, is big with consolation to us, if we know, how to suck at it.



## LECTURE IX.

Verf. 18. — *And have the keys of hell and of death.*

19. *Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.*

20. *The mystery of the seven Stares which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden Candlesticks. The seven Stars are the Angels of the seven Churches: and the seven Candlesticks which thou sawest, are the seven Churches.*

**T**he Lord is now comforting *John*, 1. From His Natures, or, Person. 2. From His dying and victory over death. 3. From His Office, which, as Mediator, He executes; instanced especially over hell and death, for these reasons, 1. Because hell and death, were the last enemies Christ had to subdue, as if he had said, I have gotten power over the greatest enemies; and consequently, I have power over the rest: and so it points at the greatness and universality of his power, as Mediator, he being made head over all things to the Church, and having all things put under him, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth, and which are under the earth, that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow. 2. For the comfort of his people. Particularly, for the comfort of *John*: because now, *John* was affrighted with the Majesty of God and the challenges of his own sinfulness, and was overcharged with fear: therefore Christ saith to him, fear not hell nor death, *John*, for I have the keys of both, and can dispose so of them, as they shall not hurt thee; so guarding him and his people against fears and down-casting, which may flow from the apprehension of hell and death, which are the main things that the awakened person, cast down at Christs feet, doth fear.

1. From our Lords repeating these grounds of consolation for *John's* encouragement, in general, *Observe*, That when fear groweth excessive, and degenerates, even in these that should least mistake Jesus Christ, it is not easily removed; but will take one ground of encouragement and confirmation after another, ere the soul be erected. This is clear from the many Arguments, and the repeating of them, to remove *John's* fear: for, Christ doth nothing idly: so apprehensive and jealous is flesh, when the Majesty of God kythes, and the sense of sin, and challenges for sin are awakened, and the creatures infirmity and weakness is discovered, and so strong is misbelief, That the souls of these who are most tenderly dealt with, (and readily none was more tenderly dealt with nor *John*, the beloved disciple who lay in Christs bosom) are hardly raised up to comfort and confidence. This flows partly, from the proneness of our nature to mistake Christ, and sink in discouragement, and partly, through our weakness and sinfulness; so that the worth of Christ, gets no credit in the general, far less in our particular, at such a nick of time as this is, when discouragement prevaleth: a thing that experience teacheth, and that souls would walk in fear of, at such times, a temper like unto which we may see, *Psal. 77. My sore did run in the night, my soul refused comfort.*

The second general, is this, That it is no great hazard for a discouraged soul to be laid at Christs feet: it's a good posture, when a soul cannot bear the weight of a difficulty, to throw it self down before Him. Christs tender to these, and though souls sin in giving way to excessive fear, through the apprehen-

sion of wrath and guilt; yet our Lord deals gently with them: when the reed is bruised, He will not break it; when the flax is but smoking, He will not quench it; when the ewes are with young, he softly drives them, and carries the lambs in his bosom, and suits his tenderness in reference to them, *Isa. 40. 11.* If any be in such a condition, it were good to believe this: Christs tenderness in such a case when the soul is laid low, is abundantly clear in this one instance.

Thirdly, More particularly, *Observe*, 1. That Believers may have apprehensions and fears of hell and death; or, the fears of hell and death may cease and be excessive in them: therefore Christ guards against it, which otherwise were not needfull.

*Obs.* 2. Much of this fear proceedeth from the ignorance of Christs Natures, Person and Offices, or, from the ignorance of him in the administration of these his Offices. Therefore when he comes to comfort *John*, he holds out his Offices, and lets him know that life and death are at his disposing. There is some secret mistake of Christ, and some strange mould of Christ in the mind, where excessive fear prevaleth: therefore it is often said, *fear not, it is I, be not afraid*: and through the following Epistles to the Churches, he ever telleth what he is, with some property.

*Obs.* 3. That our Lord Jesus Christ, hath the absolute guiding and administration of what concerns his people: yea, hath their greatest enemies at his command; he lets into hell and death, and keeps out whom he pleaseth, he gives orders in all.

*Obs.* 4. That there is no greater consolation to Gods People in time of their fears of hell and death, than to know that our Lord Jesus hath the Keys of both, and all in both, that devils will not wlen out of the pit, till he open the door, nor lengthen their chain on link, but as he lets it out, *Revel. 20. 4. 14.*

5. Lay all these together, what needs *John* fear? If evil spirits act by Christs orders, and the most wicked in hell or earth cannot exceed their orders, what needs there be fears? seeing Christ keeps the keys of the devils house, and hath orders given, and imployment carved out to them, as accurately as he hath to men on earth, good or bad; for death and hell are his servants, and go not their own errands, but his; and therefore dare not exceed their commission, yea, they must not, nor cannot, what ever malice they have in prosecuting his order: What ground then of fear is there? And so it may serve to comfort us against the evils of our outward and inward condition: there is nothing comes in Church, or Commonwealth, but as he orders it, who is faithful in all the house of God, as a Son. It were good if our meeting together had this fruit to get the faith of his Sovereignty sealed up in our hearts. If folks would chuse a good Friend, Patron, or Master, He is the Party: stick to him, and fear nothing.

*Verf. 19.* Followeth the third thing, and it is some circumstances, that make way for *Johns* writing what he saw, or, our Lords repeating and enlarging of *Johns* Commission. This Commission is so often repeated, to tell, 1. How punctual He would have *John* in keeping himself by his Commission, neither altering nor diminishing it, nor doing any thing lesse or more, but what he had Commission for. 2. To shew on what ground this word depends, and the Authority of it: it's not to be accounted authentick, because *John* wrote it simply, or because the Church accounts it so; but because *John* at Christs command wrote it: Christ will have the Warrant and Authority of His Word discernable, and out of question, especially what is contained in this Revelation: We will not find the Warrant of any so often repeated, as the Warrant to write this. 4. It may be for this reason, *Johns* former fainting and fagging might have made him forget his errand: therefore, He will repeat it to him: to tell that discouraging and fainting must not marre folk in their duty; but they would alwayes labour so to compose their spirits, as the duty they are called to may not be neglected: and though they may be surprized with fear and fainting; yet, they would up, and fall to work again. We may consider the reasons of this repetition more fully afterward.

That which He commands Him to write, doth more accurately and distinctly divide this Book, nor he did formerly, *vers. 11.* So that these words, are the compendious division of the Book and Prophecy that followeth. And we take it to be a division of it, in three sorts of things. 1. The things which thou hast seen. 2. The things which are. 3. The things which shall be hereafter; or otherwise, the first branch comprehendeth the second also: and so it's divided in two.

1. The things which thou hast seen, that is, the things that in thy time have happened, or fallen forth since the Gospel began, the History of the Gospel in its rise and victories to this time: And we expone it thus, and do not refer it only to the particular Vision spoken of before, for two reasons, 1. Because, *These things which thou hast seen*, hold forth the subject matter of the Book, as well as the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter. And the things which thou hast seen are distinguished from the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter: they must therefore be of one sort. And so, the things which thou hast seen, relate to the time past; the things which are, to the time present, as the things which shall be hereafter, to the time to come. 2. Because, comparing these words with *vers. 11.* we will find a clear difference: for in *vers. 11.* it's said in the singular number, *What thou seest, write in a Book*, and send it to the seven Churches: which looketh to the particular Vision, spoken of there; or to the following Visions; looking on the Revelation, as one Vision with so many parts; but here, it is written, *the things*, in the plural; and *which thou hast seen*, in the preterite time, that is, write the things which are past; to distinguish them from things present and to come: and so we expound these things past, from the rise of the Gospel to this time, according to the scope of this Prophecy.

2. *The things which are*, that is, the present estate of the Churches, in the two following Chapters: which holds forth the state of these Churches, as they were for the time.

3. *The things which shall be hereafter*, or, which must be hereafter, point at the Story and State of the Church from *Johns* time to the second coming of Christ: for, from the rise and beginning of the Church here, it ends not, till it bring the Church Militant to Glory, and put the wicked in the bottomlesse pit, *Chap. 20.* and 22, I mark it, because it serves to be a key to the rest of the Story. And this division, sheweth, 1. That we are not to seek in this Book of the Revelation, things that were before Christ time, as some needlessly draw it to the four Monarchies. 2. That the things contained in this Book, relate not to a generation or two only; but to things fol-

ling out in the Church to the end of the World: for, though some little things before Christs time, be hinted at in this Book; yet they are not brought in, as principal Prophecies, but as useful, to expound these principal Prophecies, as when *Rome* is spoken of (*Chap. 17.*) and its by-past Governments under the name of *Babylon*, it is brought in, to clear what is meant by the Whore which *John* saw.

Again, Two things further, are observable here, 1. Our Lord Jesus His care and respect to His Church, that will acquaint her with things past, present, and to come, for their comfort and edification, So well would He have them provided with lessons, and guarded against all times, and what ever difficulties may come. 2. Being now to enter to the story, which He is to write, He divides it ere He begin, both to make way for clearness in the thing, and for distinctness in the uptaking of it; to make it the more intelligible to them to whom He writeth, and to all that should read it; He draweth it all up to three heads. And there is a profitable use to be made of this for men, in speaking and writing, to be methodical and orderly: our Lords way of writing, is no friend to confusion, nor enemy to order, if so be, order be made subservient to edification, and not to curiosity; such is Christs order here; and to that scope doth that recapitulation serve, *Hebr. 6. 1.* and 8. 1. And so are the writings of *Paul* often, most exact in this.

*Verf. 20.* This verse containeth an explication of the mystery, spoken of before in the Vision, which *John* saw: at least of so much of it, as is useful and needful to be known: as usually He leaveth alwayes somewhat at the back of the Vision, to be a key to open the rest; So this serveth to open somewhat that is past; something that is spoken in the seven Epistles to the Angels, and several times hereafter. There is something to be supplied here, while He saith, *The mystery of the seven Stars which thou sawest*, that is, I will shew thee, or, I will tell thee the mystery of the seven Stars, &c. as He saith, *Revel. 17. 1.* I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, that is, I will let thee know what it meaneth; Jesus Christ being the best Interpreter of His own mind, condescendeth to open up so much of the mystery as was useful and needful. 1. He expoundeth the Stars: and then, 2. the Candlesticks.

1. He expoundeth the Stars; *The seven Stars, are the Angels of the seven Churches*, that is, the seven Stars signifie, mean, and represent the Angels, or Ministers, or Officers of the seven Churches: for, it's a thing ordinary, to call Ministers, Angels, *Mat. 2. 7.* *The Priests lips should keep knowledge*, and the people should seek the Law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts. In the Original, it is, *For he is the Angel of the Lord of Hosts*. So, *Judges 2. 1.* it is said, *an Angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim*: the word in the Original, is, *a messenger came up*; one, particularly sent for that errand. Ministers are called *Angels*, 1. For Gods special imploying them about His holy things, beyond others. 2. Because of that their sanctified station: to put them in mind, that they should be in their conversation, Angelical. 3. To make them to be received as Angels by others: that is, the dignity due to them. By *Angels* here, is not meant some more eminent nor another in these Churches, such as the Lord Bishop; but by *Angels*, we understand all the Bishops and Presbyters that were over these Churches. 1. Because, when it is said, *the seven Stars, are the Angels of the seven Churches*, it speaketh of them indefinitely, whether they be more or fewer; and he saith not, they are the seven Angels of the seven Churches, as it saith, *the seven Candlesticks, are the seven Churches*; but supposeth, that the number is not so exact in the one as in the other: for, if the number of Ministers were definite, as of the Churches, Why should the manner of speech be different? nor saith it, *the eminent Angels of the seven Churches*; but indefinitely, they are the Angels of the seven Churches.



*Churches.* As *Philly.* 1. He writeth to the Bishops and Deacons, supposing a plurality of such in one Town, lesse then *Ephesus*; or others mentioned here. Therefore, 2. It is not to be expounded of one man, as if some one man in each of these Churches, had had the preheminnence, because our Lord writing to some of these Churches, and directing the Epistle to the Angel, speaketh of them as moe; As when He writeth to *Smyrna*, chapter 2. vers. 10. He saith, *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer. Behold, the Devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried*: which must relate primarily, to the Ministers in *Smyrna*: and supposeth moe Ministers than one; and that in directing the Epistle to the Angel of such a Church, he understood the whole collective body of Ministers and Church-Officers, that afterward He distributes in moe individual persons. See the Notes there, and on chap. 2. vers. 24. where the Church in *Thyatira*, is distributed in three, 1. In these, who are polluted Members thereof. 2. In these, who were free of these pollutions called *the rest*. 3. In the Ministers, who are styled *You, vñiv ðs*, as distinct from the other two; yet *All* in the plural number.

3. What is then to be understood by *Angel* of *Ephesus* (and so of the rest) we may learn from *Acts* 20. 17. with 28. where *Paul* having the same business to do on the matter, in recommending the care of that Church to some, for preventing ill which He foresaw to be coming, He calleth not *One*, but the *Elders* of the Church of *Ephesus*; and giveth not to *One*, the charge or name of Bishop; but to *All* of them He committeth It. Therefore, seeing *Paul* comprehendeth all in his Sermon under that name *ἐπισκόπος* vers. 28. (and would by write, as well as word, done it) we must so expound *John* to do also, though he write in a more obscure stile, as best agreeth with this Prophecy. For this Argument is sure, These that *John* wrote to, under the name of the *Angel* of *Ephesus*, (and so of other Churches) are these who have the oversight of, and authority over, these Churches; But these are clear to be many *Elders*, or Bishops; *Acts* 20. &c. *Ergo*, &c. Therefore take we the stile *Angel*, to be collective, i. e. to the *Angels* (ieing the stile, as also the matter agreeth to all) or *Ministers* of such a Church: as suppose one were writing to a City, governed by a number of Magistrates, in the Aristocratick Government, might it not be directed to the Magistrate of such a City, and yet no particular person be pointed at, but the whole be collectively understood? and so we conceive it here. Even as, by one *beast*, chap. 13. &c. or *head*, chap. 17. he doth expresse a Civil Government, to wit, of *Rome*, before it was Monarchick; so may he be understood to do, by the figurative title *Angel* here, though it be in the singular number; Considering with all, that the things charged on this *Angel*, or required of him, are such as agree not to one; but to the collective body, of Church-Officers together. Beside, moe Ministers there were than one in those Churches: that is certain. Either then they must be comprehended under the title of *Angel*, or else taken in as contradistinguished from them with the rest of the Church; But that will be found absurd, that the Church and her guides should be some way contradistinguished, and yet Ministers not to fall under that distinction: for, *Stars* they must be, that is, *Angels*; or *Candlesticks*, that is, amongst the people, as distinguished from the *Stars*; But the last cannot be. Therefore of necessity, the first must be understood. We conceive then, as by *Church*, or *Candlestick*, is understood many Professors or Churches, (for under *Church* here, such who thus plead, will grant moe particular Churches to be comprehended: for, say they, they are *Diocesian Churches*) in an united way of worshipping or Government; So; by *Angel*, many Church-guids in an united way of Governing may be understood. Ministers are called *Stars*, for these reasons. 1. To signify and point out the eminence and dignity of the Office,

that it is a glorious and shining Office. 2. To point out what is the especial end of this Office; It is to give light: as the use of *Stars* is, to give light to the World; so it's Ministers main employment, to shine and give light to others; to make the World which is a dark night, to be lightsome. In which sense, *Matth.* 5. 14. It's said, *They are the light of the world*. 3. It is to signify, that they are but subservient lights; Our Lord Jesus is the Sun of Righteousness, that Light, that great Light; and Ministers are lesser lights. 4. It is to point out the way how Ministers become lightsome. *Stars* receive their light from the Sun, and by vertue of that borrowed light are made lightsome; so Ministers, are made lightsome, and shine to give others light, by vertue of the light that they receive from Christ: they are lights, but their light is *Star light*, a borrowed light: and eclipses betwixt Jesus Christ and them, will darken them, seeing they have no light, but what they receive from Him. This would learn Ministers and People a right uptaking of the nature of this Office, and keep off contrary extremes, that both respectively are subject unto.

The second part is expounded, the seven *Candlesticks*, are the seven Churches, as before he expounded the seven Stars to be the Angels of the seven Churches. The Churches are called *Candlesticks*, for these Reasons. 1. Because the *Candlestick* is that which properly the light is set into: and it's fitted for receiving of light, though it have none of its own; to the visible Church, is that wherein Christ Jesus sets His lights, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. *God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondly Prophets, &c.* The Church is, as it were, the *Candlestick* to the *Candle*, the proper seat of the Apostles, Prophets and Ministers after them. 2. Though the *Candlestick* give no light; yet it makes the light set on it to be the more usefull to others, as *Matth.* 5. 14. *Ye are the light of the world: a City set on a hill cannot be hid: neither do men light a Candle to put it under a bushel, but on a Candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in the house*: So Ministers are set in the Church; and their setting in the Church, is the way whereby God preserves light, ordinarily, and makes it shine. And so, the excellent comely order of the visible Church, kyths in this, that it is like a City set on a hill. And hence the Church is called the pillar and ground of the truth, 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. The light of the Truth being set in the Church, as on a pillar to make it kyth the more, and be seen the further, that others may fall in love with it. And laying both these together, the Ministers being *Lights*, and the Churches *Candlesticks*, it holdeth out a near and sib relation betwixt Ministers and People, as if the People were dark without Ministers; and the Ministers would not shine far, nor be usefull, if they had not Churches to bear them up. We ought not to strain this similitude too far, as if Churches might be Churches without Ministers, much lesse before Ministers be set in them, as a *Candlestick* still is a *Candlestick*, without a light, but certainly, very dark. That is not the scope; but it is to shew that in Constitute Churches, what is Christs esteem, both of Ministers and People, and what is the mutual relation that stands betwixt them, each to other. We know that the Church organized, is but one body, whereof the Pastors are a principal part; and that these derogate not to the other relations betwixt Ministers and People, as to be Fathers to them, to beget them, to nourish them, as a Nurse doth in giving suck; to be Mothers, travelling in birth with them: in which respect, particular Churches, and Christians have their being from Ministers, as such instruments who hath begotten them by the immortal seed of the Word.

2. *Golden Candlesticks*, 1. To point out comparatively, the excellency of the Visible Church, above all other Societies in the World; and positively, the excellency that is among the Churches: as gold is the most excellent metal; so the Church is the choice and wall of all the World beside: it's Gods Garden. 2. To let us see what is Believers duty, and what

what all the members of the Church are obliged to, they ought to be as gold that will abide the tryal, and hath no dross. The Church of Christ should be thoroughly sincere, as gold: to be like every sort of mettall, will not be enough.

*Quest. How can these Churches be called gold, seeing many of them are of so little worth, that they could scarce abide the tryal, as Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, &c. and Laodicea is so corrupt that she hath no commendation at all?*

*Ans.* Our Lord Jesus designs the Visible Church, or Churches, not according to the plurality; but according to the better part: and when there is any gold, He counts by it: even as one may call an heap, a heap of corn, though the greatest part be chaff. 3. There is something essential to the Church as Visible, which makes them get this denomination; for, the Visible Church hath a comparative excellency beyond others that are without; and Jesus Christ looking not to what they were, but to the nature of a Visible Church, He calls them *golden Candlesticks*, even as He calls the Ministers *Stars*, though there were some among them of little worth, as that Angel of *Laodicea*: because by virtue of their Office they were so: So the Churches written to, by the Apostles, are called Saints, and Holy, in so far, as by virtue of their profession and Church-state relation that they stood in to God, they were so. 3. He designs them so by virtue of their obligation, to let them see what they should be, and were obliged to be. This is a main reason why the Church of the *Jews*, is called a *Holy people*;

nor for any great holiness that often was amongst them all; but because they were separated from other People, to be a peculiar People to Him: in which respect, the children of Believers, are called *holy*, 1 *Corinth. 7.* which is not to be understood of any personal holiness; but of a holiness in respect of a federal or Covenant relation: in which respect, they are separated from the rest of the World, who have not an external right to such Church-priviledges. Thus, both stock and branches are holy, and no otherwise, *Rom. 11.*

Which lets us see, 1. What respect Jesus Christ hath to His Churches and Ministers. 2. That the Scriptures way of expounding it self, is to expound one place by another: one verse or phrase, darkly set down in one place, by an other, more full and clear in an other place. 3. Particularly, how to expound the word *are*, or *is*, the seven Stars: *are*, that is, they signify and represent: a word often used, *Gen. 41. 26.* The seven good kine, *are* seven years, &c. So the Lamb, *is* the Pass-over, and *Matt. 26. 26.* Take eat, this *is* my body, This cup *is* my blood, &c. which expressions hold out no Transubstantiation, or transmutation, or turning of one substance into another, more than what is said here imports that the Ministers were transubstantiated in Stars, or the Churches in Candlesticks, or contrarily; But it is a mysterious, and Sacramental way of speaking, to set forth the thing signified, or represented, by giving the name thereof to the sign, which represents it. And this is in many places to be adverted unto.

### Concerning a Calling to the Ministry, and clearness therein.

**T**His command of writing, was particularly set down, *vers. 11.* Here again, it is renewed; and afterward, *Chap. 2.* and *Chap. 3.* is seven times repeated, with respect to every Church he writes unto: which certainly is to shew, of what concernment clearness of a Call is, and that both in general, and particular; and is done amongst other reasons for this end, to clear *John* in his Call, and to warrand the People in their receiving of his Message. From which we may gather this, That a Minister that taketh on him to edifie a Church in the name of the Lord, had need to be clear of his Call thereunto from the Lord: it's not the general that we now insist on, to wit, that there is such a peculiar Calling, or, that none but the Lord can authorize for it; but it's especially concerning that clearness which every Minister ought to have in his Call, that with holy boldness he may go about the work, having peace in himself (what ever he may meet with in it) as one who hath not run, whereas the Lord did not send him, *Jer 23. 21.* That this is exceedingly requisite to a Minister, we suppose will be out of question to all who know that Ministers are but Ambassadors; and so for them to want clearness of the Lords Call, is to be uncertain whether they have a Commission or not: and and therefore they who look not to it, can neither have that confidence of the Lords owning them, or accepting of them in their duty, except there be some satisfaction herein, to wit, that the Lord hath sent them, or doth send them. It will be a puzzling question to many one day, Min, who made thee a Minister? Who gave thee Commission to treat for Christ? And although others may have peace in the use-making of such a mans Ministry; yet himself can have none, he being ever lyable to this question, Friend, how enteredst thou thither? and how obtained thou this honour? Doubtless from the defect of this tryal, it is, in part, that many thrust themselves into the work at first, whose after-carriage and way proves them never to have been sent; which they durst not have done, had they walked by this rule of waiting for a Commission thereto. And on the other hand, some really called to the Ministry, are yet

kept in a kind of bondage, both as to their duty and their peace; because it's not clear to them that it is so; for, although the being of a Minister and his Calling, simply depends not on his clearness of his Call: as the being of a Believer doth not necessarily infer that he must know himself to be a Believer; yet, no question, as a Believers particular comfort depends on the clearness of his interest, for which cause he should study it; so a Ministers confidence and quietness in his particular Ministry, doth much depend on this, that he be clear in his Call to be a Minister: for which cause, they who look there-away, or are entred therein, would humbly enquire for nothing more than this, that they be clear that they have Christs Commission for their engaging. And although it be impossible to be particular, or fully satisfying in this, so as to meet with all the difficulties that may occur; but Christian prudence and tenderness will still find matter of exercise in the deciding thereof; Yet, having this occasion here, (which is also frequent in this Book) we may, once for all, say a word in the general to what may give a Minister clearness in his Calling: which we may take up in a five-fold consideration. 1. Of a Ministers Call to that work, in general. 2. To a particular People. 3. In carrying a particular Message to that People. 4. What is required of him as to writing for the benefit of the Church. 5. And what respect People ought to have to Gods calling of a man, in their hearing and reading.

For the first, we say, 1. That Ministers would soberly endeavour satisfaction at their entry, if they be called to that work or not; and begin with that: This is certain, that it's not indifferent, whether men betake them to this Calling or an other: for God hath not indifferently dispensed His talents: nor hath He left men to that liberty, to choose as they will; but willeth them to continue and abide in that calling whereto they are called: and not which they have chosen themselves: yea, that a man have some knowledge or affection to that work of the Ministry, will not prove him to be called, although all that is externally needful for his promoting therein



therein did concur; for that will not prove a Call to an other Charge or Trust; and so not to this: and no question, it being a desirable thing in itself to be a Messenger for Jesus Christ to His Church, many may desire the office of a Bishop, and be approved of God in their look there-away; and yet indeed never be called of God actually to it, as experience may confirm.

Secondly, When we speak of a Call in any of the former respects, it's not to be understood, that men now are to look for an immediate and extraordinary Call, as John and the Apostles had, That were as unwarrantable as to look for an extraordinary measure of gifts, such as they were furnished with, and that in an immediate way: but it is that as extraordinary Officers had extraordinary and immediate evidences of their Call (for so it required) so Ministers and ordinary Office-bearers, that are called in a mediate way, would seek for such evidences, as mediately may satisfy them: for, the mediate calling of the Church, according to Christs Ordinance, is Christs Call, as that more immediate was: and therefore, *Acts* 20. 28. and elsewhere, these Elders and Pastors of *Ephesus* (who yet, no question, had but such a Call as these that were chosen by the People, and ordained by the Presbytery, *Act*. 14. 23. and *1 Tim*. 4. 14.) are said to be set over the Flock by the holy Ghost: and so Pastors and Teachers, who are to be continued in the Church by a mediate way of mans transmitting it to others, as *Pauls* word is, *2 Tim*. 2. 2. are yet accounted a gift of Christs to His Church, as the Offices of Apostles, Evangelists, &c. are, *Eph*. 4. 11.

Thirdly, In this inquiry, the great stress would not be laid on a mans own inclination, or a supposed impulse, which yet may be but the inclination. That being found to flow from, or to go along with rational grounds, may have its own weight; but otherwise, not; for we see often men more affectionately inclining to what they should not, than to what they should. Hence many run who are not sent; whose inclinations certainly lead them to it: and others again, that are most convincingly called, have yet difficulty to go over their inclinations, as doth appear in *Moses*, *Jeremiah*, and *Jonah*, at least in his Call to *Niniveh*. And our hearts being deceitful, and we ready to account the motions of our own spirits to be better than they are, There is need, whether in the general, or in the particular Call, to be wary here.

More particularly, we conceive, that both in general and with relation to a particular place for the clearing of a Ministers Call, respect is to be had to these four: which may be satisfying as to his peace, when they concur.

1. A mans Gift, is the great differencing Character of a Call, though it be not of it self, constitutive of a Call, that is, that one be in some measure *deserving*, or, apt to teach: this being infallibly true, that whom the Lord designs for any Immployment in His House, if it were but to make Curtains, Sockets, &c. to the Ark, He will some way fit, and make them suitable to it: and this is as the Seal whereby He evinceth in the hearts of Hearers, that he who treats, is His Authorized Ambassador.

2. To clear a man to exercise his Gift: it must not only be a Gift, but found and declared to be so, by those to whom the tryal of Gifts is committed by Jesus Christ: for, it's not the having a Gift, that maketh a Call; yea, nor that which maketh it a publick Gift, or to be acknowledged as such; but it's the orderly Authoritative mission, that followeth upon that Gift: in which respect, the exercise of the Gift, and the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, are put together, *1 Tim*. 4. 14. even though it seemeth that he had knowledge and Gifts before. If it were not thus, what a confusion would there be in the Church of Christ more than in any Common-wealth? Where it's not Gifts that constitute a Magistrate, or an Officer; but the orderly calling of a person thereunto by such as have Authority: which ought also singularly to be observed here. And the Lord hath

appointed this, not only for the publick order of His house, which is exceedingly pryzed by Him; but also for the particular clearing of the person that is to be designed. Thus, I conceive; a person that is at some doubt about his Gift, and possibly thinking it fit to edifie; yet, upon supposition that it be found otherwise by these to whom the Spirits, or Gifts, ought to be subjected, he may have peace in abstaining; what ever his own thoughts be: because the Lord hath not made these his rule. Hence also, on the other hand, some who may esteem their Gift unfit for edifying of the Church; yet if it be found otherwise by these whose place leads them to decide, and whose conscience will make them tender in it, they ought and may with peace yeeld: whereas, if there were no Authoritative trial, what a torture would it be to some to have the weight wholly lying on themselves? and what a door would be open to the most self-confident persons on the other hand? Yea, were it not thus, there would be no need of the trial of Gifts, enjoined, *1 Cor*. 14. 29, 31. which being in extraordinary gifted Prophets, it's much more to be respected in ordinary Ministers: neither were there use for so many precepts to try, and so many characters how to discern them that are fitted for, or called to the Ministry, whereof, to be apt to teach, is a main one, if there were not weight to be laid on the probation, and determination of a Presbytery, who are to count to God for their decision in such a case, and are not left to indifference or arbitrariness therein.

3. For a mans peace, beside the former two, singleness in himself is necessary, without which, both the former two will not sustain him against a challenge: except there be a testimony here, that conscience to duty, and obedience to Gods Call made him yeeld to it; that Gods glory, and promoting of the Work of the edifying of Christs Body, was his end; and that his taking up of Christs mind, to be calling him to follow this Call, was his motive that made him betake himself to this Calling and not to another, and that upon deliberation and search made, to discern the mind of God. Where these three concur, to wit, a Gift, and that orderly approved, with the hearts yeelding to the Call, upon that account, to do Christ service in that, more than in an other station, because it apprehends him to call to that immployment and not to another, we conceive there is good ground of peace, so as there cannot be a torturing challenge upon this occasion: for, although men intrusted to try, are not infallible in discerning of Gifts; yet, when use is made of this way, as Christs Ordinance, for attaining satisfaction in this matter of a Call, it's not like that His Ordinance will be a snare to any: and if tryers of Gifts should mistake; yet may it be expected, that either the Lord will discover it timely some other way to the person concerned, or graciously some other way ply him, who did yeeld only out of respect to his Call as it was supposed by him. And who knoweth also, but Gifts may follow by Gods blessing upon Labours, when He so clears a Call, if the question onely be there? As one may have peace in a Magistracy, when singly it's imbraced out of the conscience of Gods Call, although it may be they who had hand in his election did unjustly make choise of such a person. And though this singleness be not simply necessary to the being of a Call; (for, there may be a Call without it, as in *Judas*) yet, it's simply necessary for the mans peace that accepts it.

4. We take in here the considerations of Gods providence, and the concurrence of His dispensations: which, though they will not determine a Call simply, nor make a thing lawful to one, which is not in it self lawfull; yet, in positive duties, they may do much to cast the ballance in swaying a man to one Calling beyond another; as suppose one hath means and wayes in providence provided for his education, which others have not; or, he hath been led to study, conscience puts at him to take some calling, and it may be, pointeth at this, at least so far as to make

make proof of it: all doors for other Callings are shut upon him, so that he must betake himself to this, or languish in doing of nothing: sometimes others may be made use of to put at him, and the mind is kept in disquiet while he essayeth any other thing: reason here sheweth, such and such like things concurring, may have so much weight as to encourage one to follow this motion, and may confirm him when this goeth along with the former three, or hath them following upon it.

If there were more particular enquiry called for concerning that impulse of the Spirit, which may be in one, in reference to the Ministry, how to discern it? and what weight to lay on it? We confesse that it is hard to decide therein: the operations of the Lords Spirit being mysteries, and often seeming unreasonable to men; as also the deceits of our own hearts are deep, and not easily reached: Yet, for helping in this, we may say, That it's not unusuall to the Lord, to pouse one by His Spirit, when He mindeth to have him to the Ministry; and thereby to stir the heart of one, more than another, and more to this Calling than another, though in all, or at all times, not in the same measure. This in experience hath been found, and God hath afterward sealed it to have been of him: and by this, many have been brought to the Ministry, who have been profitable in it; who, had not this been, would never have thought on it, or have been perswaded thereto by others. And seeing the Calling of the Ministry is in an especial and peculiar way from God, and eminently His chole herein doth appear, it's not inconsistent with His sovereignty and interest therein, that he use this mean or way of an inward impulse. And although what is expressly spoken of this in Scripture be for the most part in reference to extraordinary Officers, and that in an extraordinary manner; yet by proportion may an ordinary impulse be gathered from that as concurring in the sending of ordinary Officers, as there is an ordinary motion of the Spirit acknowledged in other lawful duties. Yet, 1. Advert, that this impulse of the Spirit, is not in all alike or equally discernable. The Lord sometimes will thrust one forth by a more inward impulse; and will draw others by more external means: Hence it will be found, that if the thing be of God, where the way is most improbable, and there be fewest encouragements and least outward drawing, there the inward thrust is the more strong: because by it the Lord doth supplie the want of that weight, which these outward helps might have on Him. And again, where outward things do more convincingly concurr, as that a man is purposely, as it were, educated in reference to that end, provided for, and encouraged by others in the undertaking thereof, &c. In these, although the end may be single, yet often is the inward impulse lesse discernable: because the Lord hath provided other means to draw them forth, which do supply that: neither is he to be afflicted to one way of proceeding in this. 2. Advert, that this impulse may be, when yet it is not discerned, either because it is not taken heed unto; or, because the inclination may be prejudged, and the person not discern the language thereof. Or, because the Lord may make it ascend by the steps and degrees, as it were, at first withdrawing the mind only from some design that it was set upon; and it may not be positively at first known what hee aimeth at: And, Secondly, He may incline the heart to, and bring it in love with reading, and studying, and other means which afterward he may make use of in reference to this end; and yet possibly hide from the person that which he aimeth at by this. Thirdly, He may make a fire inwardly in the heart, making it some way disquiet in every other thing, and restless in whatsoever it turneth it self to, as not being its proper work; that thereby He may constrain it to look some other where. Fourthly, When this is done, He may make the person content to essay the trial of His Gift, if so be by that he may attain quietnesse, and yet still the person be but trying what the language of that impulse may mean, and not

be distinctly clear of the result. And, the Lord doth wisely follow this order, partly, to draw on the person by steps, who might otherwise be scared, if all were presented to him together: and partly, that in due order he might effectuate his point, and train up the instrument to a fitnessse for the work he is to call him to, whereas, if he had perswasion of Gods calling of him to the Ministry at first, before any acquired fitnessse for the same, he might be in hazard to slight the means, and precipitate in the thing, which the Lord alloweth not: partly also he doth it, to keep such in dependence on Him for through-bearing in every step, one after another; so that although at first, one be not clear that God calleth him to the Ministry it self, yet if he be so far clear, as that He calls him to forbear such an other Calling, to follow such a Study, to essay trials, &c. he ought to yeeld to that, waiting for what God may further reveal to him. Therefore, 3. Advert, that difference ought to be made between an impulse to the study of Divinity, and an impulse to the Ministry: one may really be stirred to the first, and ought to account it so, and so far to yeeld, without disputing what may follow; as we may see in many, who in the study of Divinity, and in trials have given good proof of Gods approving them in going that length, and yet he hath thought meet by death, or other-ways to prevent their being entered actually to the Ministry; which declareth that they were never called thereunto: as therefore, by any impulse, one cannot warrantably conclude that he is certainly to live so long; so can he not certainly gather, that he is called to be actually a Minister, which suppoeth the former: and therefore certainty in this, is not to be at first enquired for, or expected; but so much is to be rested in, as may give the conscience quietnesse in the present step, supposing that death should prevent an other: this being the Lords way, that the further one follow His Call, it will be clearer unto him, like one that ascendeth by degrees, he is still in capacity to behold the further. Yet, 4. Advert, that every impulse, which may be to the Calling of the Ministry, is not to be accounted an impulse of the Spirit of God; or, as his moving either to the studying of Divinity, or the following of the Ministry, as we may see in the multitude of false Prophets of old, and in the experience of later times, wherein many have, and do run, whom the Lord never sent. And considering the nature of our spirits, and the way that the devil may have in the seducing of some, and jumbling of others: this needeth not to be thought strange. The great difficulty then will be, how to discern the voice of the Spirit of God in this particular, from the voice of our own spirits, or of the devil, in this respect, transforming himself into an Angel of light, and sometimes even driving honest hearts to the attempting of this as a good thing, who yet may not be called thereunto of God indeed.

To help then in the trial of this, Consider, 1. That that which is an impulse of the Lords Spirit, doth more compose and sanctifie the whole frame of the inward man, it being that same Spirit which is the Spirit of Grace and supplication: therefore the more sensibly he pouse, the more sensibly are these effects; and the more composed and sanctified a heart be, the more clear and distinct will that impulse of the Spirit be: because then the heart is more impartial to discern the same. And although this impulse of the Spirit be but a common work, which may be in a hypocrite, and so alway hath not this sanctifying efficacy with it; yet, we conceive where one, out of conscience, reflecteth on it, to try whither it be of God or not, there can be no conclusion drawn from it to quiet the conscience in the acknowledgment thereof, except it be found to be like His Spirit in the effects of it.

2. That this impulse of the Spirit, is not backed with the assistance of our spirits; but some way it constraineth them to yeeld to it, even contrary to their own inclination. So that it moveth and carrieth a man over the thoughts of gain, reproach, credit



ly to edifie the Church; if he be of that weight, as his testimony may prove profitable in the Church, for the strengthening and confirming of others, or the like considerations; though no new thing be brought forth by him: which ground, as a moral reason, *Luke* gives to *Theophilus* of his writing the Gospel, *Luke* 1. 1.

2. Considerations may be drawn from the subject. As, 1. If it be a necessary point, that is controverted. 2. If the Scripture opened be dark, and obscure; and possibly not many satisfiably writing of it. 3. If the way of handling it, be such, as gives any new advantage to truth; or, to the opening of that Scripture, (though it be not so accurate every way) that is, if the manner be more plain, or more short, or more full; or, touching at some things, others have passed, or clearing what they have mistaken, or confirming, what they asserted only, or such like cases wherein they may contribute, and be useful, for the understanding of what is already written; or occasion others, to form and mould their invention, and what God hath given them, for better advantage to others; seeing some hath the faculty of inventing, others of improving what is invented: thus both are made use of, for one end, when they are brought forth together: even as in building, some are useful for plotting, or contriving, some for digging stones, some for hewing, others for laying by square and line; yet must be furnished by the former: So is it also in an edifying way of writing, every one have not all; yet should none refuse to contribute their part.

3. The time would be considered, if such a truth be presently controverted, or such a subject necessary to be spoken unto now; if such a persons interposing may be useful, if such a duty be neglected, or if such a Scripture be not made use of, and the like. These may have their weight to put folks to it, even though they should say little more than what is said by others: because then all are called, to put to their hand to help; that is, the time of it. And there is this advantage, that when many

do write, it serveth not only to confirm and strengthen what another hath said, but it occasions some to read that subject, that readily would never have read it, had not such a man written thereon, seeing another book of that subject might possibly never have come to their hands: and withall, this is advantageous when moe are engaged in the same subject. This consideration is alleged by *Bellar. prafa. in Tom. prim. out of Augustine*, as a reason to put men to write, who were not of the most excellent parts; that it was edifying, and better than nothing; yea; that it was befitting at such a time, to see many armed in the Camp of Christ, against His adversaries, although all be not leaders and captains.

4. Occasion also may be, from Gods putting one to have thoughts of such a subject when others are otherwise taken up, some not having access to be edifying otherwise; as when occasion of study is given, and the thing by publick delivery, or secret communication is known to others, and called for by them to be made publick: or that they would set themselves to it, God giving occasion of health, quietnesse, means, &c. for it: the thing getting approbation from such as are single, and intelligent, judging such a thing usefull; in this the spirits of Gods servants would be subject to others. Such considerations are frequently mentioned by worthy men, in their prefaces to their Books. And it's observed in *Vita Pellicani*, as swaying him to publish his writings, though not accounted (by himself at least) to be of accurate learning, that, *mediocriter & simpliciter scripta, mediocriter doctis placitura videntur, & quod illorum major sit copia, quam eximie doctorum, gratificari petentibus voluit*. For, as the most learned Preachings, do not always edifie most; so neither is it in writing: and though (as a learned man observeth in a preface) that which is accurate, edifieth most intensively, and best explaineth the thing; yet often, what is more popular, edifieth most extensively, and proveth profitable to many moe who are but of ordinary reach.

### Of Reading, and Hearing.

**I**N the last place, it is also clear, that people are not indifferently and without warrant to read or hear, except they know that they be warranted therein: for, this command of writing, is not only inserted, for the confirming of *John* in his Call to write, but also tendeth to warrant these who are written unto, confidently to receive and make use of what is written. And it follows upon the former: for, if a Call be necessary, to speak or write in the Name of the Lord, then ought also people some way to be clear, that in their reading and hearing they may be walking according to Gods rule and call to them in reading what He calleth them to read, seeing men cannot be supposed to be left to arbitrarinesse therein. Hence it is, that where the Lord disowneth the commissioning of such to teach, and accounts them guilty for running whom he hath not sent, and that either by writ or word, as may appear, by *Jer.* 23. and 29. *vers.* 24. &c. So also doth he reprove the people that do countenance such in their hearing or reading, while as their Call is not evidenced to be of Him. Hence so frequently, both in the Old and New Testament, are we commanded not to countenance such, but to beware of them; and that most reach the reading of their writing as well as conversing with their persons, the one being dangerous, as the other is: for, one of these two must necessarily follow, supposing them not to be called of God thereto.

1. Either they are ensnared by such and such errors, as others take on them to vent; and they are brought to give heed to lies in stead of truth: and so though reading and hearing be good in it self; yet that wise advice of *Solomon*, *Prov.* 19. 27; doth here take place, *Cease my son, to hear instruction, that caus-*

*eth to erre from the words of knowledge*. This effect is frequently the Lord thereby in His secret Justice punishing the lightnesse and curiosity of presumptuous persons, that dare hazard upon any snare. Hence it is that so often that lightnesse and indifferency in the practice of reading and hearing such as are not called, hath with it an itching after some new Doctrine, and a secret discontent with sound Doctrine, which putteth them to this, to heap up teachers to themselves, which is said, 2 *Tim.* 4. 1, 2, 3. 1. to shew the difference that is betwixt Teachers sent of God, and such as People choose to make so to themselves, without His warrant, And, 2. It sheweth what ordinarily doth accompany that itching practice, *vers.* 4. *They turn away their ears from truth, and are turned to fables*: for, as it is ordinarily a lustling to vent some strange Doctrine, which doth make men write or Preach without Gods Call thereunto; so it is an itching after some such thing, or at least a loathing of sound simplicity, that makes people thus bestow their time in the reading or hearing of such. And if no such thing be at first sensible; yet doth such persons tempt the Lord to give them up unto it.

2. Or if this follow not, we are sure that it shall no way prove usefull unto the followers thereof, as that word (*Jer.* 23. 33.) is, *I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all*. And seeing edification is Gods gift, can it be expected but in His way? or can that be accounted His way, which He hath not warranted? At best, it putteth, 1. The person in the hazard of a snare, which hath taken many off their feet, which sometime seemed to be strong: and can they pray unto the Lord that they may not be led into temptation, when they do cast themselves into the snare? 2. It carries offence

Church as such, is one body, and so ought to make use of every member, and any member, as may most conduce for the good of the whole body. There is no question, but the Church might call a member, upon supposition of his qualifications, to tryall, and (being found conform, to what was supposed) might appoint him to the Ministry: and that member ought to yield to both, from that duty that lyeth on every member in reference to the whole body, which is to be preferred to any particular member's interest: and this without respect to mens outward condition or place; providing their being employed in this station, may be more usefull to the Church, and the edification of Christs Body, than their being employed in no Calling at all, or in any other Calling. This being also to be granted, that some men may be so usefull in, and fit for publick civill Callings, as that thereby the Church may be benefited so far, that it will not be meet in every case, and in every person, to use this power; yet such extraordinary cases being laid aside, no doubt ordinarily it were usefull: And seeing all Incorporations and Commonwealths have this liberty to call, and employ their members, without respect to their own inclinations, so as it may be most behovefull for the good of the Body; this which nature teacheth, and experience hath confirmed in them, cannot be denied to the Church, which is a Body, and hath its own policy given to it by Jesus Christ for the building up of it self. This way is also agreeable to Scripture; and to the practice of the Primitive times: none can say that the Church did not choose her Elders and Deacons, and other Officers out of all her members indifferently, as she thought fit, *Act. 6.* seven men fully qualified are to be looked out amongst all the People; so in *Pauls* practice through the *Acts*; and in his directions to *Timothy*, and *Titus*: such only are not to be chosen, who offer themselves to it; but indifferently, such as may be best qualified, are to be enquired for; and when found, what ever they be, to be called and ordained to the Ministry. By all which, it appears like the Apostolick way to enquire for men that may be found qualified for the Ministry: and also, that shunning, or repining to enter the Ministry in any person found qualified for it, and thus called to it, hath never been supposed as allowable by the Apostles; but it was looked upon as a duty, for those that were so called, to obey, as it was the duty of others to enquire for such. To this also, may that exhortation of *Peter* relate, *1. Epist. 5.* and *2. vers. Feed the flock of God which is amongst you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint, but willingly, &c.* whereby it would seem, that he is pressing obedience from those that were called, that willingly they should undertake the oversight of Gods flock. Which words, if well considered, would pinch exceedingly a tender Conscience of any man, if a Call were thus pressed upon him. And indeed, if it were at mens option arbitrarily to refuse such a Call, the directions that are given to People and Ministers for searching out, calling and ordaining such, were to no purpose; for thus they might all be frustrated. We do not say this to prejudice the laudable way of training up Students in reference to this end, it seemeth that even amongst the *Jews*, these who were to teach the People, were numerous, and as it were in Colledges, trained up with the Prophets, and these who were able to teach them. The Apostles also were not defective in training of young men in reference to this, which shews the laudableness of that way. And although the main part thereof be not to be placed in Scholastick debates; yet is training necessary, which in the meanest Calling is found usefull: and therefore, not justly to be denied here. We would only say, 1. That there would be some choice made in the designing of Youths for that Study: so that in an orderly way, some might be so trained, and not have liberty otherwayes to withdraw; and others discreetly advised to look to some other employment. 2. We would not have Elections bounded and limited to that number, so as either

any whosoever thus trained up, might certainly be supposed as capable of being Ministers, or as if no Congregation or Presbytery might fix their eye upon, or give a Call unto any other. This way of calling was long continued in the Primitive Church, as we may see in the example of *Ambrose*, who being a Senator and President (although not yet Baptized) nevertheless, because of his known ability, piety, and prudence, was unexpectedly, and unanimously called to be Bishop of *Milan*: and notwithstanding of his great oppositenesse thereto, was at length so pressed as he was made to yield: and after proved a notable instrument in the Church of Christ. And it's remarked, that the good Emperour *Valentinian*, did exceedingly rejoyce, when he heard it, blessing God that had led him to choose one to take care of bodies, who was accounted fit to take care of souls. *Theoderet. Hist. lib. 4. chap. 6.* The like is recorded by *Eusebius. Hist. lib. 4. chap. 6.* Of one *Euphrasimus*, who while he was Governour of the East, was chosen to be Bishop of *Antioch*, which the author calleth *Sedes Apostolica*. This is also the established doctrine of our Church in the first Book of Discipline, in that head that concerneth Propheying and interpreting Scripture, whereof these are the words, *Moreover men in whom is supposed to be any Gift, which might edifie the Church, if they were employed, must be charged by the Ministers and Elders to joyn themselves with the Session and company of interpreters, to the end that the Kirk may judge whether they be able to serve to Gods glory and the profit of the Kirk, in the vocation of Ministers or not.* And, if any be found disobedient, and not willing to communicate the Gifts and special graces of God with their brethren, after sufficient admonition, Discipline must proceed against them, *provided that the civil Magistrate concur with the judgement and election of the Kirk: for no man may be permitted, as best pleaseth him, to live within the Kirk of God; but every man must be constrained by fraternal admonition, and correction, to bestow his labours, when of the Kirk he is required, to the edification of others.* Which if it were zealously followed, might by Gods blessing prove both profitable, and honourable to the Church.

To say something to the second head proposed, to wit, of a mans clearnesse to the Ministrie of a particular Congregation, we suppose that this also is necessary for his peace, seeing there is no reason that men ought arbitrarily to walk herein, but accordingly as they are called of God to one place and not to another: therefore we see that in *John's* commission, the general is not only expressed; but particularly, he is instructed in reference to such and such particular Churches: and according to this, we see in the History of the *Acts*, that some were ordered to Preach in one place, and some in another; and *Acts 13.* *Paul* and *Silas* in their leaving *Antioch*, and going to the *Gentiles*, were not only called by word, but confirmed and authorized by the laying on of hands; and we doubt not but this general also will be granted. For helping to clearnesse therein, The former general rules, are also to be applied with special respect to the particular case, As, 1. It is to be tried, if the Gift be not only suitable to edification in general, but to the edification of that people in particular: so that if when their case, dispositions, qualifications, &c. and his gifts, disposition, and other fitnesse, both in reference to his publick Ministrie in Doctrine and Discipline, as also to his Induments in reference to his private conversation) yea, their very corruptions and infirmities being compared together) If, I say, such a man may, in well grounded reason, be looked upon as qualified for the edifying of such a people: In this comparison also; respect would be had even to the more publick state of the Church: so as a mans fitnesse would not only be tried with respect to the Congregation it self; but with respect to other things. 2 This fitnesse would be found and determined to be so, by these whose place it is to try Gifts, even in this respect. 3. The trying of providences is to be observed; as, the rise of the Call, if it proceed



proceed from no natural or carnal end? if no other door be opened elsewhere to him who is called, he may the more warrantably step in there, if no probable settling of that Congregation appear otherwise than by him, so as his refusing might occasion a detriment to that place? If things look so as he have an esteem without prejudice in the hearts of that people; so as he may probably expect to be looked on as a Minister, and to have the Word without prejudice received from him in that place? also if without carnall respects his heart be made to incline that way, or if unexpectedly and over many difficulties the people have pitched on him and adhered to him? These, and such like, may have their own weight, so as to help to gather this conclusion, That probably such a mans Ministrie may be useful and profitable in such a place: Neither is the advice of sober and unbyassed men, Ministers and others, to be neglected; seeing often they may see more in a mans particular case, nor he can discern himself: and that is oft found to be a mean made use of by God, for manifesting of His mind in such cases. Again, if there be any competition of places, so as one be sought by moe Congregations at once, the case is here somewhat different, supposing the man to be equally fitted for several places; otherwise greater suitableness to the one, nor to the other, where it is palpable, doth cast the ballance. In deciding what to choose in this competition, there is much need of singleness and deniednesse to all outward and carnal things, both in him that is sought, and in them who seek, and in all others interested; this being a great ill to suffer carnalnesse and contentions to steal in, even in pursuit for a good Minister. Neither is there great weight to be laid upon prioritie or posterioritie in the applications that are made, the matter it self and causes which may be given for the last and for the first, can only satisfie the conscience as to the great scope of the Ministrie, to wit, the edification of the Church: seeing a man is obliged to look to edification in his Ministrie, and so to settle, where probably that may be best attained, and not as an occasion may be, first, or last moved to him: and it were good that both he who is called, and they who call, would submit all interests, and be regulated by this. We conceive also, that the decision of this, doth not mainly or principally lye upon the person himself: for, as he is not simply to judge, whether his Gifts be meet for the Ministrie in general, or for the edification of such a people in particular; so neither comparatively is he to decide, whether it be more conducing for edification, that he imbrace one Call rather than another; but this is to be done rather by these, whose place leads them indifferently to look to the general good of the Church. This then is the great rule to decide by, whether his Ministrie, considered complexly in all circumstances, may most conduce to the edification of Christs body by the accepting of this or that charge, when all things are singly and impartially weighed and compared together? so as in the result, it may, upon good grounds, be made to appear, that the one will prove a greater furtherance to the perfecting of the saines, and enlargement of Christs Kingdom than the other: as if his Ministrie in one place, may be profitable to moe souls than

in an other: and that not only with a respect to the particular Congregation; but as it may have influence to the preventing or suppressing of some general evils, or the promoting of some general good in moe Congregations beside: If his Ministrie may probably have more acceptance and fruit in one place, than in an other; if by some present circumstance, the planting of one place be more needful, and the delay thereof be more dangerous than in another, which seemeth more difficult than the place in competition therewith; if the man find, after some trial, his liberty greater, his bowels more stirred, and his mouth more opened as the Apostle speaks, *2 Cor. 6.* in reference to one more than another; if the harmonious judgement of single and uninterested faithful men prefer the one, as more edifying, to the other; and many such like, whereby Christian prudence, after the inquiring of the Lords mind, may find the general end of edification to sway more on the one side than on the other, accordingly conscience is to determine that to be Gods Call, and the person is to yeeld: for, although in every case these could not sway a man warrantably and simply in respect of his Call; yet, where the competition is in a case, that is almost equal on both sides, they may have place to cast the ballance.

For the third, That when a man is cleared in reference to a particular Charge, there doth remain yet a necessity of clearing him in reference to a particular message to that Charge: for, as the condition of every Congregation, is not alike: so is not one way to be followed with all. Hence we see that *John* hath a particular and several message in reference to those seven Churches, though all agree in the one generall scope, to wit, their edification. This is not to awaken at every time an anxious dispute, what matter to Preach; But, 1. To consider what particular faults have need to be reprov'd; what Truths have need especially to be cleared; what duties are especially to be pressed, as being most slighted amongst them; what snares they are most in hazard of, and need most to be warned against, and so accordingly to insist: for, though all duties be good, and all sins be to be eschewed; yet do we see in the Word, that sometimes, and in some places, some are more insisted on than others, upon the former grounds. 2. The necessary Truths of the Gospel, as they tend to instruct, convince, convert, comfort, &c. which are the great task of a Minister, are necessary to all people; yet in the pressing of instruction and conviction, more than consolation; or, again, consolation and healing applications, more than sharper threatnings and reproofs, That is to be regulated according to the temper and case of the people, as also the manner of proposing and following of them, according as may among such prove most edifying, as the Lord, in these seven Epistles, doth more sharply or more mildly deal with them to whom he writes. But because there may be occasion to touch this on the 10. Chapter, and here we have already exceeded our bounds, we shall say no more of it, but shall say somewhat particularly to writing and the peoples use-making thereof.

### Concerning Writing.

**I**N reference to this, we say, 1. That men may by writing communicate what light God gives them, for the good of the Church. It's true, the Gospel was at first spread and planted by Preaching, that is more properly the mean of conversion. It's true also that all the Apostles Preached; but all did not write: yet we will find, that the Apostles made great use of writing, for the informing, reprov'g, strengthening, and every way edifying of Churches and Persons brought to the faith; for, they wrote the Epistles, not only as Scripture, for the Church in

general, but also for the edifying of such persons, in particular, and for clearing of such and such particular Doubts, or Truths, which the state of such times, or Churches did most call for. There is reason also for this, if we consider, 1. The relation that is amongst all the members of the Catholick Church, whereby all are tied, to be edifying one to another, &c. 2. The end wherefore God hath given men Gifts, which is to profit with all: and yet, 3. That a man cannot by word make his Gift forth-coming in the extent that he is obliged; there is therefore

fore a necessity of using writing for that end, it being a singular Gift of God for promoting edification. It's upon this ground, as we said, that many Epistles are written, to be usefull, where the Writers could not be, and when they were to be gone. It's upon this ground also, we conceive, that many Psalms, and Songs (as that of *Hezekiah*, *Isai. 38.*) are committed to writing by the Authors: that by it their Case or Gift might be made usefull to others, for their instruction, as the Titles of sundry Psalms bear.

This way, for many Ages, hath been blessed, for the good of the Church of Christ, who have reason to bless God, that put it in the hearts of many Ancients and others, thus to be profitable in the Church. And it may be, some able men have been but too sparing to make their talent forth-coming that way to others. And as we may conclude, that Ministers may Preach the Gospel who are called, because the Apostles did it, even though Ministers are not gifted with infallibility of Preaching, as they were, because that was for edifying the Body: so may we conclude, that men called to it, may write for the edification of the Church, although they be not gifted with infallibility in their writing.

2. We gather from this, that none should take on them to write any thing, as the Lords mind, for the edification of the Church, without a Call to it: I mean not an extraordinary Call, as *John* had; but this I mean, that as there is an ordinary Call needfull, to the Preaching of the Gospel, (and we may conclude from Gods extraordinary way of calling the Apostles to Preach, the necessity of an ordinary Call) So, in the general, that same consequence will hold in respect of writing, for such an end. And if we look through the Scripture, we will find a Call for Writing, as well as for Preaching; and readily he who was called to the first, was also called to the second, as being a Prophet of the Lord. Though this particular we do not absolutely and simply press, seeing men may be called to write, and not be fitted to Preach; yet I conceive, *Solomon* is called the Preacher from his writing. And to warrand writing, we would conceive so much to be necessary as may, 1. Satisfie the man himself, as to his being called to such an eminent duty by God, and therefore there must be somewhat to hold out to Him, that it's Gods mind he should undertake such a task. 2. That men walk not by their own satisfaction alone; but that there may be so much, as to convince others, that God put them on that work: and therefore though we would not press an authoritative mission to write, as to Preach; yet, considering that *John's* warrand to write, is also a warrand to others to make use of it, and that people would have a warrand for making use of writings, as well as a man for his writing. There is some orderly thing necessary, as to point out to the man his duty in writing, for his peace; so also to point out to others their duty in use-making of it. So that neither any that pleaseth may write (but he would give some reason, beside his pleasure) nor would every one use the writings of all, as they please.

Reason 1. A Call is necessary for every thing; and men in lawfull duties are to walk by it: otherwise, all lawfull duties would lye upon all men as their calling, or be at their pleasure: which stands not with Gods putting the task, even of particulars, into mens hands.

2. To write of the holy things of God, is to take on us, to tell what God thinks, and what is His will, which is a most concerning thing; especially to do it solemnly in write, lest it prove, at least, a taking of Gods Name in vain: when without a Call we do it.

3. This may clear it, That nether publick Preaching, nor private edification by word, can be discharged rightly, but when men walk according to Gods Call in these, which is also necessary in writing.

4. There is no promise to be guided in it, or of successe to

it, without some clearnesse of a Call to it; and so it cannot be comfortably undertaken nor prosecuted.

5. All the Saints had their Call to write, who took that way: hence some Apostles have written, others not; some Saints have recorded their case, others not. The reason of this difference is, because some were called to write, and others otherwise imployed; else we must say, they failed who wrote not. Neither will it simply warrand one, that he writes truth: there was doubtlesse truth in the Preaching of the Sons of Thunder, and also of the Son of consolation; yet God thought it not good to call them all to write. And experience hath often made this truth out, that many have taken on them to write, whose writings have been exceeding hurtfull to the Church; so that had all men walked by a Call in writing, there had been fewer errors, at least they had not come unto such an height; and the Church would have been free of many subtle Disputations, that have more prejudged than advanced Godliness in it. As therefore some may fail in not writing, when they are called to it, so others may in going about it, whiles they are not called to it.

If we might enquire in the generall (for particulars cannot be pitched on) what may evidence a Call to write? We shall shew, 1. What is not needfull. 2. What will not satisfie and be sufficient. And 3. What is needfull and may be satisfying.

1. An extraordinary Call by revelation, or immediat impulse of the Spirit, such as *John* and the Apostles had, is not needfull: It might make a Writer as well as a Preacher to be suspected, if they should pretend to any such Call.

2. We think not an authoritative mission in the person who is writer, simply needfull: One may be fitted to edifie by writing, whose Gifts lead not to edifie by Preaching; yet ought not the Church to be frustrate of the benefit of his Gift.

3. We think not a pressing inclination simply necessary; seeing often, inclination thwarts with duty; and mens modesty, lazinesse or other respects, may much divert the inclination, as in *Moses*, *Jeremiah* and others, when called to Gods Work.

4. We think it not necessary, that there be any singular or extraordinary measure of Gifts beyond others: Some may be called to write by particular providences, when others of more understanding may be spared; even as some may be called to Preach, and others of more learning and ability, are passed by.

On the contrary, it will not be sufficient to evidence a Call to write. 1. To have an inclination. 2. To have Gifts: Or, 3. To be sound in truth: Nor, 4. To have a good meaning and end. These will not serve in other duties; and so neither in this, without respect had to the particulars after mentioned.

That a man therefore may have peace, as to his undertaking, we conceive there is a concurrence of several things needfull, to be observed: As, 1. There is a necessity of a single end, to wit, Gods glory, others edification; and in part may come in, his own exoneration, as to such a duty. It's not self-seeking, nor getting of a name, nor strengthening such a particular party or opinion that will give one peace in this matter. 2. It is necessary, not only that the thing be truth; but that it be edifying, profitable, and pertinent, at such a time: Gods Call to any thing, doth ever time it, and tryest it well, as most subservient to the scope of edification. Hence, that which is Error, or impertinent, can never plead a Call in writing, more than in preaching; yea, we conceive, the writing of many light, frothie subjects, or of speculative jinglings, and contentions about words, is exceedingly contrary to edification; which ought to be the end and also the rule of our practice in writing. 3. Besides these, there are circumstances in the concurrence of providences tryssling together, in reference to the person writing, to the subject written of, the time wherein, and occasion whereupon, and such like: which being observed, may contribute to give some light in the thing. As, 1. If the person be called publickly



or loſe, over his inability and unſiſneſſe; which are never more diſcovered than when this impuſe is ſtrongeſt and moſt diſtinct as we may ſee in the examples of *Mofes Jeremiah, &c.* whereas motions from our own ſpirits, do often leſſen the difficulties, and hide the unſiſneſſe and inability that is within us, and readily ground themſelves upon ſome ſuppoſed ability or probability, more than there is apparent reaſon for.

3. That Gods Spirit moveth by ſpiritual motives like himſelf, as the promoting of Gods glory, the edification of His people, the preventing of a challenge, by giving obedience to Him, and ſuch like: whereas other motions have ends and motives like themſelves, as in the falſe prophets and other teachers in the New Teſtament may be ſeen; who fed not the flock, but themſelves, and ſerved not the Lord Chriſt, but their own bellies, and fought their own credit, eaſe, &c. yea, even *Judas*, though extraordinarily moved by the Spirit; yet it's like that was not the motive which prevailed with him to yeeld; but ſome carnal motive, whether gain, credit or ſuch like, as is held forth in the Goſpel.

4. That the motion of the Lords Spirit, is, in its nature, kindly; and in its way, regular, according to the rule of the Spirit in the Word, that is, it doth not drive the heart violently as the Devils injections do, nor doth it precipitate in the following and perſuing of what it moveth to; but, as having the command of the heart, he moveth natively, without making the Spirit conſuſed, and He preſſeth the proſecuting of what He moveth unto, orderly, it being the ſame Spirit that hath laid down a rule to walk by in the Word, and now ſtirs within the heart: and therefore, the inward impuſe, cannot but be answerable to the outward rule. Hence alſo the ſpirits motion, is ſubmiſſive to the way of trial, appointed in the Word, and is not abſolute or peremptory: whereas motions from our ſelves, or from the devil, are head-ſtrong, and irregular, aiming at the end or thing, without reſpect to the way preſcribed for attaining it; or, at leaſt, do not heartily approve of the one as of the other, eſpecially if it be thwarted in its deſign by them.

5. That this motion of the Spirit putteth to the uſe of all means that lead to the end, as well as to the end it ſelf, that is, reading, ſtudy, praying, or what may fit one for that end: for, the Spirit never divideth the end and the means: and *Pauls* word to *Timothie*, ſubjoyning that precept, *give thy ſelf to reading*, to that other of his *fulfilling his Miniſtrie*, doth confirm this: whereas, when theſe are divided, there can be no claim made to a motion of the Spirit of God.

6. Conſider, that the impuſe of the Spirit, is a fitting, gifting impuſe, and carrying along with it a capacity in ſome meaſure for, and a ſuitableneſſe to, the thing that it calls to. Hence, in the Scripture, the call of the Spirit, & the Gifts of the Spirit go together. And this laſt, is given as the evidence of the firſt, and in this reſpect, although there may be an impuſe to the ſtudy of Divinity without the Call of the Spirit unto the Miniſtrie; yet can that never be counted an impuſe of the Spirit actually to enter the Miniſtrie, where this gifting of the Spirit is not: for, it can never be inſtanced in all the Word of God, that His Spirit ſent any, but his Call was ſealed by His Gifting of them. And ſo, in effect, the trying of this impuſe, ſo as one may have ſatisfaction therein, will for the moſt part reſolve in the trial of thoſe two formerly mentioned, to wit, the ſiſneſſe of ones Gift to teach. Secondly, The ſingleneſſe and ſincerity of the motive whereby one is ſwayed to follow the impuſe: for, although the Spirit may move; yet if it be ſome carnal ground that perſwadeth the perſon to yeeld to that which the Spirit moveth unto, it can be no ground of peace. Theſe two then are at leaſt, as to a mans peace, the *ſine quibus non*, in the trial of this impuſe; ſo that without them, he cannot conclude himſelf to be called actually to enter the Miniſtrie, or have peace in the undertaking thereof.

To ſpeak a word then to what weight is to be laid on this impuſe: Concerning it, we ſay, 1. That if all things beſide concur to the fitting and qualifying of a Miniſter, this is not ſimply to be accounted a *ſine quo non* in ones undertaking: Be-  
 cauſe, 1. There may be ſome impuſe, though we diſcern it not, 2. Be-  
 cauſe there are more clear grounds to gather Gods mind from, as the effects of the Spirit fitting one with Gifts for the charge, and other grounds laid down, whereupon weight may more ſafely be laid, than upon any inward apprehending, or not apprehending of the Spirits motion, which is never given to us in any thing, as the alone rule of obedience; and we muſt ſuppoſe the motion of the Spirit to be where theſe Gifts are, ſeing as the impuſe hath alway the Gifts with it, ſo we may gather the impuſe from the Gifts.

2. We ſay, that where other things concur not, no impuſe is to be accounted a ſufficient evidence of a Call to the Miniſtry ſimply, upon the grounds formerly given: yet, 3. A diſtinct native, ſanctifying impuſe, may be a Call to uſe means, and to wait on in Gods way for attaining of ſiſneſſe in a ſubmiſſive manner, ſeeking rather to know what God intends, than as being abſolutely determined in reſpect of the end. 4. Although Gifts, ſingleneſſe of heart, and an impuſe concur together; yet will not theſe conſtitute a Miniſter, though they may evidence a Call to the Miniſtry, and warrand one to ſtep in, when a door is opened to them: be-  
 cauſe neither of theſe, do include an Authoritative Commiſſion for him to treat, although they do put him in a capacity to be ſent as an Ambaſſador of Chriſt, when he ſhall be Authorized. Hence it is, that in the caſe of Deacons, *Act. 6.* who are by Gifts fitted for their Office; and of Biſhops, *Tit. 1. 7. 8.* and 9. who are, in the reſpects there ſet down, to be found qualified for their employment; yet is the Authoritative ordaining of both, mentioned, as that which did conſtitute them Officers in theſe reſpective ſtations. Laſtly, we ſay that yet this impuſe, when all concur with it, may have its own cumulative weight for the ſtrengthening of one that hath it, to the undertaking of this Charge, when the Lord in his ordinary way opens the door unto him.

To ſhut up this part of the diſcourſe, we conceive, that it were uſeſſe to the Church, and conducing exceedingly for the clearing of Entrants to the Miniſtry, that there were ſome choice and way of tryall, both of ſuch as might be preſently found fit to enter the Miniſtry, and alſo of others that might be adviſed to ſtudy in reference thereunto; and that it might not be left unto men themſelves alone, whether they will offer themſelves to tryall in reference to that Charge or not. For ſo, many may, and no queſtion do, ſmother good Gifts which might be uſeſſe, thereby prejudging the Church thereof, who by this grave convincing, and ( ere it fail ) Authoritative way, might be brought forth, and would more eaſily be made to yeeld thereunto, when the burthen thereof were not wholly left on themſelves; whereas; now, partly, from ſhame and modeſty, partly, from cuſtome, and undervaluing of the Miniſtry, none ordinarily who otherwiſe have a temporall being, or any place, do betake themſelves to this Calling: and it's hard to ſay that either none ſuch are giſted for it, or that ſuch Gifts ſhould be loſt. And by this, on the other ſide, we ſuppoſe, that many who do now deſign themſelves to the Miniſtry, ( be-  
 cauſe none but ſuch as take that way are called thereto ) would be aſhamed to thruſt forth themſelves; and ſo the Church might have acceſſe a great deal better to the providing of her ſelf with able and qualified Miniſters; whereas now ſhe is, almoſt, confined in her choice to a number that give themſelves, or at moſt, are deſigned by their Parents, or poſſibly conſtrained by neceſſity to follow ſuch a ſtudy. It's true, this way the Lord may provide His Houſe, and may ſo engage thoſe whom He minds to make uſe of; yet certainly, it looks not ſo like, in an ordinary way, for attaining of edification as the other: and conſidering that the Church

offence along with it, in reference to the party who runs un-  
sent, it proves a strengthening and confirming of him, and so a  
partaking of his sin: in reference to others, it either strength-  
ens them, by that example, to cast themselves in that snare,  
which possibly may be their ruine; or, it grieves them and  
makes them sad who are tender of such things: or, gives oc-  
casion to make all difference of that kind to be thought light of.  
All which should be eschewed: at least it doth this, it diverts  
men from that which might be more profitable, and to which  
they might expect a blessing which they have not a promise of,  
nor can expect in this.

And seeing Reading is a special mean of edification, if well  
employed, and a great step to destruction when otherways, as  
experience doth prove, people who are commanded to watch,  
and to choose that which is most excellent, cannot be left in  
an indifference in this; yea, the spending of our time rightly  
being the improving of a special talent, which, in reading ma-  
ny things, may be exceedingly mispent, if not hurtfully abu-  
sed: Christian wisdom therefore is mainly called-for in this,  
that a right choice may be made. Especially, considering,  
that it's but little time that many can spend in reading; there-  
fore by a wrong choice they incapacitate themselves from read-  
ing that which may be more profitable for their ease and stati-  
on. And also, seeing every one hath not that ability to discern  
poison from good food, there must be therefore a necessity  
that people regulate their Christian liberty in this rightly, lest  
it become looseness, and turn to be a snare. Also though some  
whom God hath furnished with Gifts, and by their place and  
Station calleth them to convince gain-sayers, may, and are called  
to acquaint themselves with writings of all kind; yet ought  
not all to take that liberty to themselves, more than they durst  
hazard publickly to debate with adversaries of any kind; seeing  
the strength and weight of their errors are stuffed into their  
writings, and we are no less unable to encounter their writ-  
than their word.

In matter of hearing, it is not so hard to discern who are to  
be accounted to speak without Gods commission: because ordi-  
narily, such have either no warrantable Call at all, (no not  
in the outward-form; and so cannot be accounted but to run  
unsent) or, by palpable defection from the truth, and com-  
mission given them in that Call, they have forfeited their com-  
mission, and so no more are to be accounted ambassadours to  
Christ, or watchmen of his flock, than a watchman of the city,  
is to be accounted an observer thereof, when he hath publick-  
ly made defection to the enemy, and taken on with him. For  
we are here to rest in the external Call, and not to dispute that  
which is inward: because it passeth our reach; and Christ hath  
furnished his House with external Ordinances, for the war-  
randing of his peoples peace in reference to these things: there  
is therefore great difference to be placed here between one  
that is called, and one whom we think not worthy to be cal-

led: it's the first that warrands hearing, whereof we may af-  
terward have some occasion to speak

It is more difficult to give directions in reference to reading:  
yet, seeing that now God hath furnished His people with many  
useful books, that in experience have been found to be such,  
we may for the help of the weaker propose these general di-  
rections. 1. That they would spend their time in the reading  
of such books, as judicious tender Christians have found good  
of before, or shall recommend to them: such as (so to say)  
have been tried and tasted, and therefore may be, as good food  
in which there is no hazard, medled with. And there is no  
difficulty here: for, such and such books are commonly este-  
med such, and it is easie to attain to the knowledge of them.  
2. Some respect may be had to the Author so far as may help  
to a decision in this, whether such and such a book may be  
made use of, if it be known to be his? that if by other writings,  
preaching, or otherways he be known to be sound and seri-  
ous, such a book, may with the more confidence be hazarded  
upon: It is for this that frequently the names of Authors are in-  
serted in their writings, as is done by John frequently in this  
Book. For, though no mans name ought to bear such sway  
with any, as to make them digest any thing without tryal, be-  
cause it cometh from him; yet it may give to one, freedom to  
make use of the writings of such, rather than of another, of  
whom there is no such ground of confidence. 3. Where Books  
and Authors are noted by the judicious and godly to be dange-  
rous and unprofitable, and in experience have been found to  
have been so to others, distance would be kept with such; lest  
we find the proof thereof by our own experience, which we  
would not learn from others. 4. Where Books and Authors  
are both unknown, we conceive that it's more safe for private  
persons for a time to abstain the reading of them, untill it be  
found what they are by some others who may more judiciously  
discern the same, and in the mean time to spend that time in  
the reading of such as unquestionably are profitable: because  
by this we lose no time, and this may be done in faith, know-  
ing that we are not hazarding our selves upon a temptation, which  
by reading the other, that is unknown to us, cannot be. And  
seeing men usually take this way in making choice of Physicians  
for the body, who are in experience found by others to be skil-  
ful and useful, rather than to hazard on any who are yet un-  
known and have given no such proof; wisdom would say, that  
no less should be required in the making use of Physicians or  
remedies that tend to our spiritual edification, it being of no  
less concernment than the other. And if these things were ob-  
served in writing, reading, and hearing respectively (as they  
may be applied in cases) the Church of Christ might be pre-  
served from many Errors and offences, which by this liberty is  
occasioned; and many persons saved from much hurtfull, and  
unprofitable labour, both in writing and reading.

## LECTURE I.

### CHAP. II

Verf. 1. **U**Nto the Angel of the Church of Ephesus, write, These things saith he that hol-  
deth the seven Stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven  
golden Candlesticks:



2. *I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil, and thou hast tried them which say they are Apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:*

3. *And hast born, and hast patience, and for my Names sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.*

**F**olloweth now the particular Epistles to the seven Churches, wherein our Lord maketh them know how privie he is to their actions, ill or good, commending the one and reprovng the other; with some promises and threatnings intermixed. There are somethings common to all these Epistles; some things peculiar to the Churches he writes unto, as they are commended only, as *Philadelphia* and *Smyrna*; or discommended only, as *Laodicea*; or somewhat of both, as the other four.

1. It's common to all to have their Epistles agreeing in the form, though different in the matter: As, 1. To be divided in an inscription, comprehending the party to whom and from whom. 2. A narration, or body, comprehending the particular message Christ sends to them. 3. A conclusion, comprehending some promise to the over-comers; and an advertisement to all hearers to profit.

2. All are directed to the Angels, or the Ministers, of the Churches, and not to the Churches themselves immediately, though the first direction, (*Chap. 1. vers. 11.*) be to them. And in the close of every Epistle; it's said, *what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.* It any ask how the Churches and Angels, or Church-guides, are so indifferently and promiscuously named? *Ans.* For these reasons. 1. Because the Church and the Collective Body of Officers are so exceeding near of kin each to other, and in their interests, so interwoven, that, in the Scripture phrase, to write unto the Church, and to write unto her Officers, are one; as *to tell unto the Church, Mat. 18.* and to tell unto the Church-Officers, are one. 2. Because the Church is virtually comprehended (to speak so) under her Officers, who are not only the special members, but also the representers of that body: and as one, writing to an Incorporation, or Burgh, and directing his letters to the Magistrate thereof, may be said to write unto the Burgh; even so it's here: for, though Ministers in respect of their Authority and Administration of the Ordinances, do not represent the Church, but Jesus Christ, whose Ambassadors they are; yet in respect of their united way of acting together, and their sympathizing with all the members, and their joyned interest in all the affairs belonging to the members, and the reciprocal sharing that is between them and the members, of all good or evil temperatures, they may well be said to represent the Church, whose servants they are for Christs sake: even as the Magistrate, acting in his duty, representeth God; yet in some sense also may be said to represent the people. 3. Because there is ordinarily a great *likeness* and *likeness* between the Minister and people of that Church whereof he is Minister; he lukewarm, and they are lukewarm; he lively, and readily it is so with them, as we will see in all the seven Epistles following: and therefore the writing unto and describing of one, doth by consequence include both, especially, considering that whether the Churches estate be good, or ill, the Minister hath much influence on it, and therefore both in reproofs and commendations, the first word is directed to him. 4. Because the order Christ hath instituted in His Church, doth so require: he reveals not his mind immediately to the people; but first to His Ministers, and by them to the Church: for, our Lords way, is orderly, so as may prevent confusion in His Church: which is done, not by putting it in the hands of people; but by putting His Ministers

to it in these things which concern their station, and these being such things as belong peculiarly to Ministers to be amended, in the Epistles therefore doth he particularly direct it to them.

3. All the titles given to Christ, are for the most part taken out of the Vision, *chap. 1.* only they are chosen and pitched on as may best serve the scope of every Epistle; as the Lord is to discover their case, or, accordingly to threaten or promise, the title is wailed which is most fiteable to that end: as here, Christs presence, care, and sovereignty over His Churches and Ministers, are laid down, when He is to discover a secret fault in them, and to threaten the un-churching of them for it, there being ordinarily in every Epistle two titles, one respecting the case of the Church written unto, the other the promise or threatening which is annexed: and therefore are they, upon the matter, often in plain terms resumed in the close of the Epistle, which may give some insight in the meaning of them.

4. It's common to them all, to begin with this word, *I know thy works*: that so there may not only be an evidence of Christs God-head; but also to remove all exception, which might be made against his testimony. We take it to look ordinarily, not so much to His approbation, as to His Omniscience, simply: because it is indifferently made the ground of reproof, as well as of the commendation: and therefore is used in the Epistle to *Laodicea*, where no commendation is given.

For more particular use-making of these Epistles, Consider 1. the immediate scope of them, which is to stir up the seven Churches, according to their several conditions, to hold fast what was right, and to amend what was wrong, having in them the discovery of the then Estate of those Churches, and some warnings fiteable to that end: and so they are not in a Prophetical way primarily to represent particular Churches in ages following: Yet, 2. Are they useful in a special manner to other Churches, being doctrinally applied to their case, as the Lord applyeth the words of *Isaiah 29. 13. Matth. 15. 7. Hypocrites, will did Isaiah prophesie of you, &c.* whereas *Isaiah's* words do principally respect the people in his own time; yet may they be applied to all Hypocrites in such a case, as if it had been intentionally spoken of them: so may it be here in the application of them to particular Churches, in the like cases: yea, to particular persons, according to the common close *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear, &c.* And the Epistles may be so much the more useful in application, than other Scriptures: because in one map they comprehend together the complex case of a Church, with the particular directions, reproofs, and encouragements, which befits the case. 3. The Epistles being directed to both, the Angels and Churches, to the one mediately, to the other immediately, as we shew, we would beware of confounding the directions and matter contained in them as equally agreeing to both, as also, of too rigide separating of them; as if what principally belonged to the Minister, did no way belong to the people, and contrarily; but to look what may agree to either, without confounding of stations or sexes. As in all other Scriptures we take directions in things belonging to Magistrates, to be given to them, and so to others in all several stations respectively; so here, what belongeth to Ministers, apply it to them: as for instance, preaching, and judicial tryal of corrupt men; that, so far as it is authoritative, belongs to Officers: yet so far as people have access in their

stations to promote such ends (as many wyes they may) in so far it belongs to them, and so in other cases.

*Vers. 2.* Followeth the body of the Epistle (for, the inscription is opened, *chap. 1.* except what concerneth the application of it to the estate of this Church) and is hath several steps in it, 1. A general word, which is the ground of our Lords pronouncing His censure, *I know thy works*, to hold out his Omniscience without approbation or commendation. The meaning is, I know all thy works inward and outward, thy forwand way of Administration of all things in the Church, all thy outward carriage in things, the things themselves, and thy frame in going about them, the matter and manner of doing them, and the end thou hadst before thee in them; and I know them perfectly, exactly, and thoroughly; a thing that in the entry to His service and every other thing, we would look to and bear in mind, that Christ is acquainted with all our carriage, and every thing that escapeth us. And this being often repeated, it saith, that Christ counts this a main part of His message, to have souls convinced of His perfect and through knowledge of their works.

He proceedeth to the commendation, *vers. 2, 3.* The commendation is, 1. Shortly set down: And, 2. More particularly explained: primarily, It's applicable to the Angel; but secundarily to others. It's shortly set down in three steps in the words, *thy labour and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them that are evil.* Having told them in the general, that He knew all their works, good and evil, He tells the particular works he commends, 1. Their *labour*: the Word in the Original, *Κόπος* the labour which is properly applied to Ministers in their Ministerial work: It's that word, *1 Tim. 5. 17.* *Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially these who labour in the word and Doctrine;* And, *1 Thess. 5. 12.* *Know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord;* and it's a word that sets out the great carefulness and painfulness of the Ministry: and being spoken especially to the Angels, the meaning is, I know thy painfulness and care in the work of the Ministry, committed to thee, especially thy painfulness in preaching, although proportionably we are to look upon Christs taking notice of, and approving the carriage of the several members of this Church in reference to their duty. 2. Their *patience*: this respects their suffering, labour in duty, and submission in suffering, go well together. I know (saith He) very well all the persecution and suffering thou art under, all the ill-will of some within, all the malice of others without, against thee, and all the troubles thou hast met with from Satan and his instruments, and how patiently, submissively and constantly thou hast born them all. The 3. thing whereby they are commended (and it relates especially to the Ministers) is, their zeal in executing Discipline, *They could not bear them which were evil*: and therefore, for as patient as they were under crosses; yet they were stout, courageous, and zealous against corrupt men; by trying, censuring, and giving no tolleration to them. And this he also points at, with a commendation.

2. He explicateth more fully these three steps; beginning at the last, first: and so goeth backward through the three. 1. He beginneth at and explicateth their zeal, in not bearing with corrupt men, *Thou hast tried them which say they are Apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.* Wherein these three particulars are explained, 1. Who the ill men were whom they could not bear, even false teachers, that took upon them to call themselves Apostles, as if they had been indued with an infallible Spirit, and had an universal charge. And it's set out, as a part of their zeal and commendation, that these false teachers, that pretended to such a Commission, and to be so forward for Christ, were yet put to proof and trial by them.

2. The orderliness of their proceeding, is commended, that they took not things by guesse, nor upon hear-say; but tried them: they first tried their doctrine by the touch-stone; and then by the doctrine, whether they who preached it were of Christ or not, or had a call and commission from Him; it holds out an exact and judical way of proceeding and trial of them, both in their doctrine and call. 3. That as they were not indeed Apostles, though they called themselves Apostles; so they found them out to be what they were, liars and deluders of the people, especially in alledging a commission from Christ, when they had none. And this being a main part of the commendation of the Angel, and of his exercise, it's most largely insisted on.

*Vers. 3.* He explaineth their patience, and *hast born, and hast patience*: their bearing, looks to the sufferings they met with from the false Apostles, in the prosecuting of their trial: wherein they met with many afflictions; yet they endured to prosecute their duty as good Souldiers do. *2 Tim. 4. 2, 3.* *And hast patience*; which relateth to the quiet and patient manner of their suffering affliction. It is nothing to suffer, when folk cannot eschew it; but they suffered patiently in the doing of their duty, and continued in patient suffering. 3. He commends and explains their labour; *For my names sake, thou hast laboured and not fainted*: which first words, *for my names sake*, will agree well to the word going before; and so is the ground of their submission and patience under crosses: or, it may look to the words following; and so the meaning is, for zeal to my glory thou hast endured all this pains; for my names sake, thou hast been at pains in doing, and hast overcome all rubs in the way. *And hast not fainted*: that is, thou hast not been wearied of, nor scared or boasted from, thy duty: nor made to desert it for all the suffering thou hast met with, but respect to my Name, hath made thee persevere. So then, their labour, as it was spoken of before, points at their painfulness: and here it respects their singleness, that it was not in a way of self-seeking, but for *His Names sake*. 2. That it was constant and continuing: they were carried on without interruption in prosecuting their zealous intention.

*If it be asked here, how such as call themselves Apostles, or do count themselves not subject to the Discipline of a particular Church (as these who pretended to be Apostles behaved to do) can be orderly proceeded against by Church tryal and censure, especially of a particular Church?*

*Ans. 1.* There is no Apostle nor Angel, in the preaching of the Gospel, that is altogether above tryal: they are, as such, above erring in Doctrine; yet may and should their Doctrine be tryed according to the Word, *Acts 17. 11.* *Galat. 1. 8.* Because, even Apostles are but Ambassadors, and are not Lords over the Faith of Gods People, but helpers of their joy, *2 Cor. 5. 20.* *1 Pet. 5. 3.* &c. Secondly, Apostles in the guiding of a constitute Church, oftentimes used not their extraordinary Authority, as acting by themselves by virtue of their infallibility; but jointly with others, in an ordinary way, clearing and confirming their Doctrine and practices from Scripture, and Gods Call, warranting them in that particular, as appears by *Peters Apologie, Acts 11.* and *Paul* with the rest of the Apostles their proceeding, *Acts 15.* In which two respects, it's suteable for Believers, to try the Spirits, *1 Joh. 4. 1.* Thirdly, We say, that no presumptuous title assumed by ones self, nor any irregular walking, as belonging to no Church, or not to such and such a particular Church, can exempt any member of the Catholick Church from tryal, and, if need require, from censure of the particular Church, where such person, or persons, shall reside; which we shall confirm from these reasons. 1. Not from tryal: because in so far the Doctrine and practices of the Apostles themselves (who were not fixed members of any particular Con-



gregation for their Membership; and their Office behoved to be of equal extent) were subject to tryal, that it might be known whether they were of God or not, as is said. Yea, 2. Neither from censure (supposing it possible that they should erre, and them actually to have erred) as we may see by *Paul's* supposition, Galat. 1. 8. *If I preach another Gospel, &c.* and also by *Paul's* open rebuking of *Peter* when he was to be blamed, Galat. 2. 14. 3. This same practice may confirm it, the Church rulers of *Ephesus* were not scared by that title, nor yet by their not having Membership among them (as it seems such could not have, being readily strangers, and thereby having the greater access to give out themselves for the thing they were not) yet they went on to try and censure, which is particularly commended in them by *Jesus Christ*. 4. It may be confirmed from that power, that *Christ* hath given to His Church-officers for edification, and for preserving the Church committed to them from infection, which would seem to be defective, if men had liberty (under the former pretexts) to vent error and commit scandalous practices, for the ensnaring of others, in Churches whereof they were not properly members; and though it might be said, that simply such persons were not under the tryal and censure of such a Church; yet *cautus* and in that respect, as it's necessary, for the good of that Church, to have these persons tryed and censured, they do fall under their authority; and warrantably it's put forth for putting some more on them, for the preventing and removing of offences from the People. 5. It may be confirmed from the unity of the Catholick Church visible, by which any member thereof (if no particular thing impede) may claim the privileges of a member by communion in public Ordinances of Word and Sacraments in whatsoever Church, though he be no particular member thereof; and therefore *à pari* he ought also to be liable to the Discipline of *Christ* in any particular Church, where he shall fall to be: (seeing that claiming the privileges of a Church, and submission to the Ordinances thereof, are in themselves reciprocal) and though some profane wretch renounce his own privilege; yet that makes not the Church to lose hers; but so long as he continues a member of the Catholick visible Church, as long is he under censures of the Church, which are put forth in particular Congregations. 6. It may be confirmed from the absurdities, that otherwise would follow, As, 1. There might be a scandalous member of the Catholick visible Church, who could not be reached by Church-censure. 2. One Christian might offend and stumble another: and *telling to the Church*, would be no remedy to it, *Matth.* 18. if no particular Church had power over such a one, which is contrary to *Christ's* scope. 3. A door would be opened to a loose liberty within *Christ's* House: for, in such a case, men could neither be censured, nor cast out of the Church, nor in any Ecclesiastical way, be compelled to take on Church-membership, or live regularly in the Church; by this, there might be some Christians sick and needing this cure of Discipline, to whom it could not be applied; by this the ordinance of Discipline would not be of equal extent with the Sacrament of Baptism: All which, are absurd.

*Observe*, 1. *Christ* would have us always walking in the sense of His Omniscience, which makes him begin all these Epistles with this, *I know thy works*: a profitable, but a difficult Truth to be believed by Christians.

2. *Christ* is an unprejudged witness, and should be esteemed so by His Church; He beareth testimony unto them, as He taketh notice of their good, as well as their evil.

3. Such as *Christ* never called, may take on them highest titles in the Church, pretend confidently to a most immediate Call, carry fair, and gain respect, and have some gifts for that end, as it seemeth these had who called themselves Apostles.

4. That diligence in duty, and difficulty in the performance of it, often go together: to do, and to bear, are often joyned: two things that in our resolution and practice we would not sunder; and if it were believed, we would not feare at the very shadow of suffering in, or following upon, our duty as we do.

5. Patience in suffering, and impatience against corruptions and corrupt men, can well stand together. This people is said to bear and suffer; and yet it's said, they could not bear: the reason is, because their patient suffering, or bearing, in the one word, relates to their enduring of crosses; and their not bearing, or suffering, in the other word, relates to corrupt men, and their zeal against them. It were a good thing to knit these two together, not to let our zeal wear away our patience, nor our patience prejudice our zeal. There is a kind of zeal that puts folks alway to do, to the end they may shun suffering, that is not good; and there is a sort of patience and meekness that wants zeal and sharpness in reference to the purging of *Christ's* House; a patience that can bear with ill men: and this is no more to be commended than the former. This Angel is commended that he eschewed both, and had both patience and zeal in exercise, running in their right channel, and put forth toward the right objects: and would God these were more seen and discernable in our practice; the one would make our zeal to shine, and the other would make our patience and humility praise-worthy: and if they be not joyned, our zeal shall be carnal, and our patience, luke-warm: and neither of these will be commended of *Christ*.

6. There is no name, privilege, or title, that should scare people, especially the Ministers of God, from searching or trying corrupt men, that bring corrupt Doctrine, pretending a Commission from *Christ* when they have none, though they should have the pretext of Ministers and Apostles, and had never so great gifts (for very like these men who took this name to themselves wanted not gifts) or so smooth a carriage to insinuate themselves on people, and to commend their presumption to them: for, it was commendable zeal in this Angel, to try them, and discover them.

7. If folks will put to proof and tryal many things and persons that have fair names, they will be found very unlike the names they take. It is a time wherein we had need not to take every thing on trust from all persons, though their gifts were great, and they had big titles and names; but humbly and soberly to wait on God for light and direction, searching and trying both mens carriage and Doctrine, and the Commission they pretend to in carrying of it.

8. Where an immediate Call is pretended unto, and great titles assumed, ordinarily it is to carry on some strange Doctrine or design, and is therefore to be suspected by the people of God, 2 Cor. 11. vers. 13.

9. The censuring of corrupt unseemly Ministers, is a most difficult task, what from their nature, and sometimes from their parts; what from the addictedness of many unto them, Yet it is a special duty: and although it be often difficult to follow, and be mistaken by many others; Yet that it's acceptable before *Jesus Christ*, may appear from these considerations. 1. That the Scripture holdeth forth no kind of persons as more abominable in themselves, and more hatefull to Him; for which cause, they are called dogs, and dumb dogs that cannot bark, *Isai.* 56. 10. *Salt without favour, wolves, idol-shepherds, such as feed themselves, and kill his flock, blind guides, &c.* Hence it is that there are not more sad expostulations with complaints of, or threatnings pronounced against any, than against these: Our blessed Lord *Jesus* multiplies woes unto such in a more terrible manner than was usual to Him, *Matth.* 23. 2. There is no kind of persons that prove more dishonourable to our Lord *Jesus*, and to His Gospel than such; these make the Law to be despised

despised, *Mal. 2.* and the Sacrifices and Ordinances to be counted vile and contemptible, *1 Sam. 2.* Such especially open the mouths of prophane men against Religion, and the Author thereof, and exceedingly derogate from the authority of Him they pretend to have sent them, and to the Ambassage they are sent with, while as they look so unlike Him. And upon this account it is amongst others, that such particular directions for the singular qualifying of Church-officers, are given in Scripture: and the censuring of such, and that by Christs own Authority, vindicateth Him, which cannot be but honourable and acceptable to Him. 3. The scandalous miscarriages and unfaithfulness of Ministers bring a special blot upon all Religion, as if it were but meer-hypocrisie and tended to the fostering of such ills: and profane men are exceedingly strengthened in such Atheistical apprehensions, when these ills are not taken notice of, and censured by Church Authority: whereas by this severity in the exercise of Discipline, the faults are seen to be in persons and not in Religion, or the Ordinances thereof. 4. There is no such contempt done to our Lord Jesus, as for one to pretend to have Commission from Him; and yet to be running unsest by Him; or, having gotten Commission, to miscarry by unfaithfulness in it: this is a betraying of trust, and cannot but be looked on as a high contempt against Him. 5. As there is a suitableness in the censuring of such Church-officers to Christs mind, so there doth appear in the same a tendernefs of, and zeal unto His Glory. Hence it is, that His most zealous servants, as *Elias, Paul*, (yea, and Himself when on earth) did set themselves most against that generation. 6. There is no sort of men more hurtfull to the Church, by obstructing Christs end in His Ordinances, to wit, the edification of His People: for, such profit them not at all, *Jerem. 23.* yea, they stand in the way of their profiting, sometimes by corrupt Doctrine; sometimes by example; sometimes by fading and weakening of these who look more tenderly to the practice of Godliness: and if no other way; yet by filling the room, and so standing in the way of the peoples being provided with such as might be helpfull and faithfull. Now, considering the great respect that our Lord Jesus hath to the edification of His People; and considering the weight that He hath placed upon this Ministry, as a mean for promoting of that end, and withal, the great obstruction that follows to that end, when this mean disappoints, it cannot but be accounted acceptable to Him to remove such an obstruction. Yea, 7. Considering that there is nothing He commends more than mutual love to His Disciples, and there is nothing wherein love can appear more to them, than in seeking their spiritual edification, which was that wherein His own love eminently kythed; and there is nothing wherein this kind of love kythes more to Him or them, than that they be fed with knowledge and understanding, by Pastors according to His own heart, according to His word to *Peter, Peter, loves thou me? then feed my lambs*: it cannot therefore but be looked on by Him as acceptable service. And indeed, if it be commendable to relieve a neighbours beast from hazard, when there is a sloathful shepherd; or to relieve the bodily life from temporal hazard, how much more must it be commendable to prevent the eternal hazard of immortal souls, which by corrupt Ministers cannot but be in hazard? 8. There is nothing that more rejoyceth and hardneth corrupt men, than when they are like People, like Priest, and have Pastors according to their own heart; and there is nothing that they are more provoked and displeased with; than the censuring of such: yea, even men who have no respect almost to Religion at all, yet abhor and oppose the censuring of such, as if it were a peece of Religion (or rather of opposition to Religion) to do so: which certainly sheweth that the following of this tryal, must be a main furtherance to Godliness, and cometh near the Kingdom of Christ. 9. Not onely is there an obstruction to Godliness by such, but

they have a main influence upon the advancing of prophanity, and the kingdom of the Devil, as if professedly they had confederated with him against Christ. Hence it's said, that from them doth prophanity go out to the whole Land, *Jer. 23.* And they are called Ministers of Satan, *2 Cor. 11.* as Ambassadors employed by him in his service. And where it's thus, not only are scandalous practices committed, but avowed, as if were in contempt of Godliness, and of faithful Ministers, who seriously study the promoting of it. Hence it is, that often there is a kind of stated enmity against faithfulness and faithful men, not only amongst such Ministers themselves, but in their Congregations and Followers; which sheweth the prejudice that cometh by them, and so that necessity of removing them.

It may now look like cruelty (it may be) rigidly to pursue such, and like pity to spare them which may much be applauded unto by many: yet if we could consider what hazard may come to immortal souls in a short time by the want of a powerful Ministry, much more by the having of corrupt men, either in Life or Doctrine in that station, and what thoughts souls will have of that cruel pity in the day of Judgement: we are perswaded horror would affect the hearts of these who are concerned; considering how many are palpably in hazard through defect in this; Can it be thought that Christs ordaining of a Ministry was only to have men bearing such a name, and not to have such as effectually and seriously would promote His design? and can that be expected, whilst men unfit for it, or unworthy of that calling possess the room? and if it be a deplorable condition to have Congregations desolate without the Ordinances, and living like Heathens, or as sheep without a Shepherd, or blind men without a Guide, is it any lesse, yea, is it not much more lamentable to have such as rather marr than further the main design? which breedeth confidence and security in some natural men, occasioneth prophanity and looseness in others, and almost serveth to no end, but to keep such a Congregation from one that may guide them, and them from knowing their want, or hazard: and in sum to obstruct, and put in a non-entry, their edification, more than if none were there at all: for, Christs way appointed for edifying of His Church, is not only to have the form of Ordinances, by men supplying these places; but to have such as may by His approbation follow His way of attaining His end. We conceive that the regulating of the entry of Church-officers, so that none but such as are thereby approven may be admitted, and of the tryal of these who are in, that such who carry themselves unworthily may be removed, is one of the main ends why Church-authority is given by Jesus Christ for the edification of His Body, as the special directions to *Timothy* and *Titus*, which do regulate Church-officers, especially in the admission and accusation of Elders, do demonstrate; and if this main point be neglected by Church-officers, it may justly provoke God to weaken, if not to break that Authority to them, and to make them and it in their hands justly to become despicable, which nothing furthers more than the admitting and permitting of corrupt and unmeet Officers to be in the Church. And if people delight to have it so, and fret at any thing which may amend it, much more if they affect the continuance thereof, and concur to the supporting of such, it may be that the Lord give them a fill of their own wayes; and by error, confusion, or some other way, so bring it about in His just Judgement, that either they shall have no face of Ordinances at all, or have the carcase of them as a snare and a curse unto them, who received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved, but contented themselves to have the shape and form of Christs Ordinances only among them without respect to the end for which he appointed them. That zealous and pungent discourse, which Mr. *Baxter* hath to this purpose in the close of his *Agreement*, is most weighty and convincing; and the matter thereof, so far



as concerns this, worthy to be considered. All which is still to be understood of such legall trialls as are followed on solide grounds, and in an orderly circumspect manner; for such was

this triall of the false Apostles, by the Angel or Elders of the Church of Ephesus, which usually is cited by Divines to confirm the power of the Church in censuring her Officers.

## LECTURE II.

Verf. 4. *Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.*

5. *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy Candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.*

**O**ur Lord Jesus is the faithful and true witness, who impartially testifieth, both of what is right, and what is wrong in His Church: we have heard His commendation, shewing what was right; He began at that, to make way for the other part of His testimonie, which is to discover what was wrong; and it is set down, *vers. 4. 1.* More generally by a transition from the commendation, *Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee*, that is, though all these things be true, and thou be commendable in them, and I commend thee for them; yet, there is a *nevertheless* added; that is not all, there are somethings wrong which I also take notice of, and will quarrel for, though there be many things right. This shews, 1. our Lord Jesus His impartiality in taking notice of all, good and ill. And, 2. It shews the extent of duty which consists in an universal respect to all His commands; and falling in somethings, may be as a dead flie in a box of ointment, to mar the savour of the rest. And, 3. That it's meet for Believers to know their whole estate, their ill as well as their good: both are useful to them to be known, and both are represented by our Lord Jesus unto them; His commending of them, alters not what is justly reprobable, His reproof prejudices them not in what is commendable: this way Believers ought to take in reference to themselves. 4. It shews, that even Believers should take a reproof, as well as a commendation, especially when it cometh from our Lord Jesus His mouth; yea, though in many things they be right, yet should a reproof, notwithstanding thereof, be digested in any thing wherein they are wrong.

2. The particular reproof, is set down, *thou hast fallen from thy first love.* 1. By *love* here is not understood the object beloved, as it's said of widows, *1 Tim. 5. 12.* who had cast off their *first faith*; it was not so here: there was no publick defection in matter of Doctrine, as the commendation preceeding clears. Nor, 2. is it necessary here to be understood principally of a decay of love in the habit it self, but in the exercise and fruits thereof, as is clear by the opposition following, *do the first works*; which points out the fault reproofed, to have consisted in the neglect of these, which is again removed by the performing of them; though we think there is a suitableness between the habit and its fruits, as it is with the one, so is it with the other: and few acts and fruits do evidence the habit thereof to be cold and languishing. 3. Neither do we understand here by *falling* from their first love, a total falling from fruits; but comparatively a falling from some former acts and degrees, or their vigorous manner of acting from love, as they had wont formerly to do, called *first love* here, and afterwards, *first works*. By comparing then this reproof with the commendation, we conceive, it doth include these three, 1. A falling from those duties, wherein especially true love to God, and charity to others consisted, that is, they were much in outward reformation, profession and zeal that way; but wanting inwardly, heart-burning love and affection to God, and so in some measure were hypo-

critical; in that their love within was not answerable to their profession without, but were more taken up in external fruits, than in the inward exercise of love, in so far agreeing with the Pharisees in that fault reproofed, *Luk. 11. 42. Ye tithe mint, &c. but passe over judgement and the love of God.* 2. As it looks to others, it may say, though there was zeal in the external Worship of God; yet there was great defect of that love, sympathie and affection of one of them, with and to another, that should be; this being ordinary, that love inflamed to God-ward, and love one to another, go together: and therefore as it importeth they had fallen from their former warm impressions of love to God; so also from their kindly affection one to another, and had fallen in part to be more in Sacrifice, and externals of Worship, than in Mercy and love one to another, *Hos. 6. 7.* and *Matth. 12. 7.* The third is, a decay of love in the manner of doing duties; so that though they continued in the practice of former duties towards God, and towards others: yet in respect of love to God, as the principle acting them in such duties or affections towards others, they had much decayed; and therefore may be charged to have fallen from their first love, though they continued in the externall performances, because the former native vigour and life in those duties was decayed. Whence we may gather, that there may be many things commendable in a Church, or in a person, and yet there may be a secret quarrel between Christ and them, as *Psal. 78. vers. 34, 35, 36.* compared together, do shew; yea, that there may be many things right in a Believer in respect of externals, and yet a dissatisfaction to Jesus Christ in their secret condition. That this Angel, and many of these written to in this Church were Believers, this reproof clears, which supposeth them once to have had love; that they have many things commendable, the former verse is clear; to wit, pure profession of truth, zealous exercise of discipline, diligence in doing, and labouring, patience in suffering, honestie in their end, *for Christs names sake*, and continuing in all these without fainting; yet is there a *nevertheless* added, which many make hearts to tremble, & not to reckon their condition from externall performances; and ought to put Believers to it, to see how they will free themselves from this part of the challenge. 2. Our Lord Jesus doth especially take notice of the love of His people, and is much swayed in His commendations and reproofs according as He findeth it in exercise towards Him, and towards others. 3. Love within may be cold, when folks practices without look very hot, and upon the matter may be accepted of Christ. 4. Believers often at their first engaging to Christ, have their love more warm towards Him, and towards others, than afterward it will be; or, Believers ordinarily slips from that warmnesse of affection that accompanieth their entry, and becometh more cold in their affections towards God, and towards others; the first love continueth not. 5. Backsliding and declining from what folk have been, either in profession or practice, is, and will be a speciall article of Christs charge. Hence is it, that *bold face* is so frequently

frequently repeated in the following Epistles: not only to intimate what is our duty; but also to evidence how ill the Lord taketh declining when He finds it among His people, Heb. 10. vers. 38. *If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.* 6. Every decay is a falling, and hurts the Work of Grace proportionably as grosse commissions do; and it's as impossible for a man to sit up in the exercise of inward Graces, and not to hurt them, as for a man to fall from a high and not be wounded.

Vers. 5. Followeth the direction, which our Lord prescribeth as the duty suiting their case, and the threatening wherewith He backs it. The direction hath three steps, every one of them making way for another. The 1. is *Remember from whence thou art fallen*, that is, advert and consider how it is with thee, be it was at the beginning; that so by reflecting upon themselves, and comparing their present condition with what is past, they might be brought to take up their own condition. In sum, it implieth, that there had been in them an inadvertencie unto, and forgetfulness of their own condition for a time, which had made them without challenges slip into, and continue in that backslidden condition. Unto this, *remembering* is opposed, which taketh in, not only a simple act of memorie, but a sensible exercise of the conscience and affections also, following upon their reflecting on themselves; like the word, Ezek. 16. 61. *Thou shalt remember thy ways*, &c.

The second part of the direction is, *repent*: this is the fruit and end of the former, relating also to what was past, that not only they should look upon their own ways, but that their eye should affect their heart, for the upstirring of them in the exercise of Repentance: which includeth these two, 1. A kindly indignation against their sin, and against themselves for their sin, so as in some part, they avenge God of themselves in the judging and censuring of themselves in the behalf of God, as it is in 2 Cor. 7. 11. 2. It taketh in an inward and outward change of their way for the time to come, which is ever a fruit of true Repentance; when the party is brought not only to confesse, but to forsake their sin, as the words following clear in the third direction; which is, *do the first works*. This relateth unto the time to come, that is, that what once they had been at in the performance of Worship to God, and in duties one to another in the manner, as well as in the matter, and were now fallen from (as we hinted at in the reproof) that they should by all means set themselves to recover the same, this being a native fruit and companion of Repentance carefully to abstain from the evils, and perform the duties which they have been most touched with in the challenge. These three go well together, and notably prescribe the remedie of a soul backslidden from liveliness to deadness, and directs to the recovery of their former state, which will not be attained by lazie Prayers, and fainting complaints; but by serious up-stirring, and exercise of these three, *self-searching, repentance, and practice*, and that in the native order as they lye.

More particularly, from the severall directions, *Observe*, 1. That as forgetfulness of our own condition, and not reflecting on our selves, is the great cause of much declining and backsliding in heart; and of continuing therein; so upon the contrary, self-examination, and remembering of our own way, and reflecting on our selves, is a notable mean to prevent decay, and to entertain a good frame; as also to further the exercise of repentance, and to recover a frame when it's lost. 2. Believers may fall into that neglect. 3. When Believers become negligent, they decline in part, though not wholly. 4. When Believers fall, they are to take the same way for their recovery. 5. Believers may be under great decay, and yet not take great notice of it, nor from whence they are fallen; yea, it implieth further, that where the decay is within, and the carriage fair without, (as here) it's hard to get them convinced of it.

From the second step of the direction, *Repent*, &c. *Obs.* 1. That Repentance is a duty incumbent even to Believers, 1 Job. 1. 3. 2. That it is called for, wherever there is sin, even of omissions, as here. But, 3. Especially where there is declining. 4. Change of practice, where there hath been sin, will not be sufficient, if repentance for what is past do not accompany it.

From the third step, *Do the first works*, *Obs.* 1. That Believers first works, are often more commendable, than these which come after. 2. There may be great difference in the same works on the matter, even of the same person, in Christs account. 3. Works, and works lively gone about, are called for from Believers: Christ Jesus was no legall Preacher; yet doth He require both Repentance and Works from these *Ephesians*.

The third thing in this Epistle, is the threatening, or certification, wherewith this direction is pressed, (which doth the more confirm the former Doctrine) or else *I will come unto thee quickly, and remove thy Candlestick out of its place, except thou repent*: In which words, we are to consider the thing threatened. 2. The persons threatened. 3. The certification, upon which it's pronounced. 4. The person threatening. And lastly, The speediness or suddainness of His performing what He threatened. The thing threatened, is the removing of the Candlestick out of its place. By Candlestick, Chap. 1. vers. 20. is understood the Church: Therefore by the removing thereof must be understood the un-Churching of them; So that *Ephesus* now a Church, and Candlestick, should have that removed, and not be continued a Church: this is in effect like that, *Zach.* 11. of the Lords breaking the two slaves, and refusing to feed that people any more. This is a sad, though a just threatening, which may put us to enquire wherefore the Lord thus threatneth this Angel, and Church, beside any other? especially considering they were not the worst, (as was seen in the commendation,) why then is she threatened? and how usually the Lord doth execute this, shall be spoken unto, when the words are opened.

2. The person threatened, is most especially and immediately the Angel, as is clear by using of the singular number, *thy Candlestick*, and *I will come to thee*, &c. And with him, we conceive, that the threatening respects most these who were really Believers in that Church: because especially, the charge of falling from the first love, and direction of doing the first works agree to them. The threatening also of removing the Candlestick, would be most laid to heart by them. Thus Christ usually threatneth; Yea, correcteth His own, when He lets others slip, *Amos* 3. 2. Neither doth He here so particularly charge and threaten the Heathens for refusing the Gospel, nor yet the false Apostles, or *Nicolaitans*, for open abusing it, as He doth this zealous Angel: the reason is, not because He loves them lesse; but because their sins come nearer His honour, and He is more affected with them; and because He mindeth their good, He judgeth and chasteneth them, lest they should be condemned with the world, 1 *Corinth.* 11. 32. whereas He suspendeth His judging of the rest, and bestoweth not a reproof upon them, untill judgement altogether surpriseth them.

3. The certification upon which this great judgement (which is greater than either Sword, Famine, or Pestilence) is threatened, is, *except they repent*: by which we may gather, the necessity of Repentance in it self, and its acception by Jesus Christ, not as if there were any merit in it to deserve, or any moving impulsive vertue in it to perswade Him to pity (as humiliations use to perswade men) He is not capable of such motives: nor yet as if He had any delight in the sadning, and exercising of His People; but that He may shew the peremptory connexion between Repentance and Pardon; which in the order of Salvation He hath laid down; thereby to make the sinner know something of the ill of sin, and worth of grace: which



Is the reason why the preaching of the Gospel ordinarily begins with this. By Repentance here, we do not understand strictly the grace of Repentance, as it is contradistinguished from Faith, much lesse any naturall or worldly sorrow, which may be in a hypocrite; but we take it as it comprehendeth the whole work of Conversion and Faith in Jesus Christ, as sometimes it's taken, *Matth. 4. 17.* compared with *Mark 1. 15.* because it is proposed here, as the way to prevent wrath which is due for sin, which cannot be done without faith.

The fourth thing to be considered, is, the person threatening, *I will come*, I Jesus Christ who walks among the golden Candlesticks, I the Lord of the Vineyard, *Matth. 21. 40. 41.* This is mentioned, First, To let us see Christs absolutenesse and sovereignty over His Churches, to dispose of them as He pleaseth; that Ministers and People may learn to hold their Church-being of Him: Secondly, To hold forth Christs peculiar Authority, in Churching, and un-Churching; and that peculiarly, this belongeth to Him: there is no Man, nor Enemy, nor Persecution, &c. can loose the relation of a Church in its being, but Christ Jesus, or they, as ordered by Him.

The fifth is, *I will come quickly*, yea, and *unexpectedly*, as the word imports. This is added to shew that Christs threatnings are in earnest, and that Hearers would not dally with them. It sheweth also, how easily He can overturn a Church, and make no Church of it; He hath often gathered Churches quickly, and can He not dissolve them when they look to be in their prime? Who, having read the commendation of *Ephesus* in the former verses, would have expected such a threatening in the close?

The words now being opened, we may enquire, 1. *How this threatening of un-Churching a Church useth to be executed?*

Answer, We conceive it doth not necessarily imply the over-running, wasting and destroying of such a City or Land, that it should be no City, but that it should be no Church. Sometimes indeed God will even by such a mean bring about this thing threatened; But here we take it to hold out some other thing, than if He had threatened Sword or Pestilence upon them: It is the same upon the matter with that, *Matth. 21. 43. The Kingdom of God shall be taken from them, &c.* which was Christs word to the Jews, and is especially these wayes broght to passe. The first, is sinfull, that is, when a Church sell themselves to false Doctrine, which overturneth the foundation: in which sense, *Nos. 2.* the Lord denies *Ephraim* to be His Wife, because of her spirituall whoredoms whereby she had broken her tie: thus a people may be said to un-Church themselves by their unbelief, confusions and errors (unconsistent with the foundation) according to that, *Isai. 50. 1.* And *Rom. 11.* the Jews are said to have broken themselves off by their unbelief. The second way is penall, that is, when the Gospel hath not fruits among a people, the Lord removeth the Light, and His Ordinances from them, taketh down His hedge from about them, and (as it were) sendeth them a bill of divorce, refusing to own them afterwards as a Church: not by giving them up to outward enemies oppression (which for a time they may be free of) but by ratifying their own sentence of rejecting of the Gospel, as it is, *Act. 13. 46.* and thus the Kingdom of God was translated from the Jews; and they became no Church, when the Gospel was taken from them and sent unto the Gentiles. A third way may be mixed, partly sinfull, partly penall, a people upon the one side not receiving the love of truth; and therefore upon the other side, God gives them up to strong delusion, whereupon they proceed from evil to worse in the believing of lies, as it is, *2 Thes. 2. 10.* However, this is certain, this flourishing Church of *Ephesus*, hath now long since been a proof of this Truth; for, error growing to an hight, and delusion and ignorance following upon the back of despising the Gospel, hath brought that Church into the estate that it is now into.

For the second Question, *why the Lord peculiarly threatens the Church of Ephesus with these punishments?*

Answer. It is not because His discontentment was more with her than with other Churches; But, 1. It's like, they thought outward honesty and reformation enough for their Church-estate, and that there was no cause of fear of un-Churching, so long as they continued pure in profession, and zealous in purging, &c. And therefore to beat down this conceit, and to shew the necessity of power, as well as of form, for continuing of a Church-estate, He doth subjoyn this threatening of un-Churching, especially to this Church. 2. Because these here threatened, would lay more weight on this threatening, and be more affected with shoring to be un-Churched, than with either Sword or Pestilence, &c. The Lord therefore applieth wisely that which He thinks most conduceable to this end. 3. It's like, their outward Church-estate was something thought of by them, and the external frame of Ordinances in purity, and that of Discipline in vigour, might be rested on, and too much esteemed of, especially by the Ministers (it being too ordinary for men to think too much of external forms) The Lord therefore in this threatening toucheth the fault that might stick secretly to them, even in their zealous prosecuting of externall reformation. 4. Because He would have all men knowing the respect He hath to sincerity, and the influence which the exercise or not exercise of grace hath upon keeping, or losing of externall Priviledges. Therefore doth He so threaten this Church when no outward cause of such controversie seemeth to be before men.

If it be asked further, Why this Church is called the Angels? For, *Thy*, hath reference to the Angel, and by the *Candlestick*, meant the Church it self. Or, 2. How this becomes a threatening to the Minister, it being liker a plague upon the People? Or, 3. How the People can be plagued for a sin in their Minister? We shall consider the first by it self, after we have gone through this Epistle. And now to the second question, we say, This threatening becomes his plague. 1. Because of his interest in them, and affection to them: nothing can come on a People, but it affects the Minister; their stroak is his: yea often it's sorer which is on them, than what is on himself. *2 Cor. 11. 29. 30. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?* was Pauls touch of the infirmities of the People. 2. It's the nearest stroak can be on a Minister, to be stricken in his Charge, or blasted in his Ministry, &c. in this he is smitten as a Minister, in things peculiar to a Minister: other stroaks are common to all men: yea, thus to be smitten in the un-Churching of his Flock, is striking at his Crown, and his Joy, *1 Thess. 2. ult.* for, a faithfull Minister will to account it. 3. It's probable, it was some contentment to him to see things go right in his outward Ministry, Censures to be weighty, Discipline vigorous, the People to give him credit and countenance, &c. without reflecting on his own spirituall condition, or aiming at the inward warming of love in the hearts of his People, but thought all well, and who but he, that had such a well ordered Church? The Lord therefore threatneth to take that ground of boasting, or self-pleasing from him. It's a sad thing when a Minister cannot carry even, when things go well, and cannot look to himself and the people also, and be humble when he is countenanced: want of this, spilleth many hopeful beginnings in Ministers hands. And this relation, *thy*, is particularly mentioned here, to make the threatening touch him the more; it is not *the Candlestick*, but *thy Candlestick*, which was to be removed. For there be two things that make a thing to be in esteem with men, and the losse thereof to affect them. The First is, That it be in it self *το αγαπτον*, that is, a thing lovely and desirable. The second, That it be *το ιδιον*, that is, a thing which is a mans own; These two going together, That it is both an excellent thing in the self, and withall a mans own: when once evill befalls that thing, it doth exceedingly presse a man.

man. Now both these are here, *the Golden Candlestick*, there is its excellency in it self, and *thy Candlestick*, there is the Angels interest and propriety in it; Both are set down to affect him the more. And indeed a Church being in its blossoming and rising condition, and all things seeming to go well therein even then, to be threatened thus, cannot but greatly affect the heart of a faithful Minister.

To the third, *How can people be punished for Ministers faults.*

*Ans.* If they were altogether innocent, it might seem hard; but when they also are guilty; yea, and it's like here under the same guilt, there is no wrong, but it's the correcting of two by one whip, both Minister and People, for their formality and resting in outward forms, without power. 2. Though People in one particular be innocent; yet a Ministers fault may occasion a plague on the People, who are guilty by other sins, even as the fault of a Magistrate, as we may see in *Dauids* numbering the people, and Gods plagues him in the people for it, though they were in much, free from that particular sin, and as sheep, what had they done? So, when a Peoples outward profession, or observance to the Ministry and Ordinances, become the ground of a Ministers pride, or boast, they may by some confusion be put through other, and so his

pride and glory is stained, and their hypocrisie and formality punished; even as on the other side, a peoples vanity of their Minister, may have influence on the Lords blasting of him, that it may be seen, all flesh is grass. Which consideration ought to make Ministers and People walk respectively one to each other, yet soberly; lest the Lord be provoked against both.

From this threatening, *Observe*, 1. That no Church or Minister hath a lease of a Church-state and the Gospel, if they abuse it. *Ephesus* is now no Church; yea, *Israel* was broken off. 2. It's one of the greatest threatnings that can be, to be un-Churched; Sword and Pestilence are not like it. 3. It may surprise a Church in a very flourishing outward condition, if love be wanting. 4. Nothing hath more influence in procuring of judgement, than coldness in love to God and others. 5. The estate, good or ill of Gods own People, hath most influence on the continuing or removing of the Gospel. It's not for the guilt of *Nicolaitans*, or false Prophets, that this is threatened; but for their sin who once had love. 6. Repentance and diligence hath great influence to prevent such a threatening. 7. Ministers and People may have much influence on one anothers good or ill condition; and sometime we may read our own distemper and scourge; in the distemper of one another.

## LECTURE III.

Ver. 6. *But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.*

7. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*

**T**He sixth verse containeth the last thing that is comprehended in the body of the Epistle to *Ephesus*, and it's a kind of mitigation of the sharp reproof and threatening going before: as He began with a word of commendation, so he will close with it, and will let them see, that though He had marked their sin, and reproved them for it; yet He was the same in His love, and had the same thoughts He began with towards them: and it is in sum, this; for as much wrong as is in you, and for as much as ye are fallen from your first love, yet there is some sparkle of zeal in you, ye have this good thing, that the corrupt doctrine of the *Nicolaitans* (which began soon to corrupt the simplicity and purity of the Doctrine of Christ) is hated and abominated by you, even as it is by Me.

To clear this a little more, we shall speak to these three things. 1. What these *Nicolaitans* were. 2. What this hatred was. 3. How it was commendable; or, what is the ground on which it is commended.

For the 1. We shall consider first what the *Nicolaitans* were. 2. What was the occasion and rise of their error, or erroneous Doctrine.

For the first, what they were. There is not much recorded of them in Scripture; yet it seemeth from all that is written of them (being compared with what is written of them in this Chapter) that they were such a sort of Schismatical Hereticks, as had corrupt doctrine in their mouths, and corrupt and licentious practices in their conversations. Therefore their deeds are spoken of in this verse, and their Doctrine *vers. 15*, both which are said to be hated of Christ, there being a suitableness between their Doctrine and their deeds.

For the particulars of their Doctrine and deeds, many are asserted by the Ancients, but two things mainly are pitched on.

1. In their Doctrine they opened a door to licentiousness, and maintained, that fornication and adultery were no sin, and they cried down Matrimonial chastity, though called for and approved of God. 2. In their practice, without all respect to offence and scandal, they lived as they listed, eating things sacrificed to Idols (a thing much stumbled at in those dayes) abusing their Christian liberty to licentiousness and looseness, taking advantage of, and abusing the decree of the Apostles, *Acts 15. 20.* that Christians would abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood, as if all these things had been of one and the same nature, as indeed at that time they were, all necessarily to be abstained from, as if they had been of one nature. These are granted by all to be the two main things that these *Nicolaitans* were guilty of: though there be that adde many more, as *Epiphanius* doth: and if we look to the 13. and 14. *vers.* of this chapter, it is not unlike, that the Lord points at these two faults: for in the 14. *verse*, He tells *Pergamos*, that she had them that held the Doctrine of *Balaam*, who taught *Balaam* to cast a stumbling block before the children of *Israel*, to eat things sacrificed unto Idols, and to commit fornication: and in the 15. *verse*, So hast thou also them that hold the Doctrine of the *Nicolaitans*, which thing I hate. Where they that maintained the Doctrine of *Balaam*, and the *Nicolaitans* are the same: and He meaneth as *Balaam* taught *Balaam* to ensnare the *Israelites*, by drawing them to their Idol feasts, and commit fornication with the daughters of *Moab*; so saith the Lord, ye have the *Nicolaitans* that follow the same footsteps, and teach the same Doctrine.

2. There is more difference concerning the occasion and rise of this Heresie. It is commonly and by the most part (if not by all) attributed to that *Nicolas*, that (*Acts 6.*) is mentioned



among the seven Deacons that were chosen to wait upon the tables, and who gets there a testimony, that he was a man full of the holy Ghost: but there being various opinions about the occasion and rise of it, I shall name two that are special, and choose which of the two we think safest.

1. Some write of him, that having fallen from his integrity, and become dissolute in his practice, he strove to maintain it in his Doctrine (a thing too common to draw our Doctrine to maintain our practice) and formally taught this error, and begat many profane followers. Neither (say they) is it like, that such a vile sin would have been fathered in Scripture on such a man, if he had been innocent. Others set it down with more mitigation and charity to *Nicolas*, thus, That this *Nicolas* having a beautiful wife, was suspected to entertain jealousy of her, it's like from some others, Members of the Church; and being too inadvertant and rash in the way which he took for removing that suspicion to make it be seen that he had none, he brought his wife in publick, and holding her forth, said he, cared not who conversed with her, so far was he from being suspicious of her honesty.

This rash fact, though flowing from a good intention (say they) was abused by some to patronize the errors formerly mentioned beyond his intention: And they were called *Nicolaitans* on this occasion: not because he taught so, but that they concluded so from that his practice, and fathered what they maintained on that worthy man: as it is ordinary for corrupt men to father their corrupt opinions upon, and to shelter themselves under grave and Godly mens names. This last, in the doubtfulness of this case, it being asserted by the most ancient (to wit, *Clement Alexand.*) we rather imbrace, partly, because of that mans commendation, *Acts 6.* where it is said, he was a man full of the holy Ghost: and partly because it is most charitable: and therefore is safest, especially, where such a testimony is given to the man in Scripture. And for as abominable as this was, it was for many centuries of years, revived and continued with many additions in the Church, by *Gnosticks*, *Basilides*, &c. by those called the *Saturnians*, *Carpocratians*, and many others, who made a pretext of *Nicolas* for their patron. A thing to be wondered at, that so soon after Christ, while *John* the beloved Disciple was living, Satan should assault and set upon the Church with such errors: and yet as wonderful, that after those errors were refuted by an extraordinary Apostle, speaking from Christs own mouth, they were vented and maintained by those Hereticks, a symptom of that peartness and impudency that corrupt men are led with, when so soon, at such a time, contrary to so clear reproofs, men durst vent and abide by such gross things: O what force and efficacy hath the spirit of delusion when it's letten loose! and what a height may it come to! Tremble at the beginnings of it: it's hard to conceive, with what audacity and boldness it will bear itself out, that though our Lord would write an Epistle from heaven, delusion will so blind folks, that they will not question their errors.

The second thing to be spoken unto in this commendation, is, that they hated the deeds of the *Nicolaitans*; not their persons simply, but their deeds, and them as promoting these deeds: though the Church had these men among them, and was severe in her Discipline; yet the Lord taketh notice of this especially, that she kept a secret, sincere abhorrence of them in her heart: nor only did not the Angel and Church countenance them, nor only censure them, nor only forbear their company; but they had such an abhorrence of their deeds and of themselves, in carrying on these deeds, that the thinking of them was abominable: as saith *David*, *Psal. 139. 21, 22. Do not I hate them that hate thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred. And Psal. 119. 104. I hate every false way. So this hatred in*

reference to these *Nicolaitans*, was not carnal, or in reference to their persons simply; but in these three respects especially. 1. In respect of their deeds and doctrine, it struck at their deeds as here, and at their Doctrine, as *v. 14.* And, 2. Looking upon them as instruments and ministers of Satan, made use of by him for corrupting and poisoning of souls, and flouting of the Gospel, they abhorred them considered as such; what every pity to their persons, or desire to their Salvation they had. 3. As they conceived them to be hateful to Christ and hated by Him, so did they hate them; squaring their hatred, as they did conceive Christ to hate.

*Observe 1.* That there are some things and persons, especially at some times, that it is not enough for the people of God to abstain from them in their practice, if there be not an abhorrence of them in their hearts. The way of error and corrupt practices that follow on it, should be abhorred, as any other sin, how gross and scandalous soever; Heresie as murder, and Schism as witchcraft, *Gal. 5. 19.* and there is good reason for it: for if folk be not serious in hatred of, and so out of love with the thing, they may soon fall in the practice of it: and simple abstinence will never be counted sincerity before GOD, whose tryal is how it stands with the heart and affections, how the heart is affected or disaffected toward the thing?

2. Our Lord Jesus counts it some mark of sincerity, when there is a single hatred of the way of error, as it is in it self evil and hateful to, and hated by Him.

The third thing in this mitigation, is the ground on which their hatred is commended; it is conformity with Christ, which I also hate. I hate them: therefore it's commendable in thee to hate them; It's a sure ground of commendation, to hate what He hates, and love what He loves. This ground of commendation, implyeth two things. 1. That it's well done to hate what Christ hates. *Observe*, Gods people should love and hate one thing with Jesus Christ; they should study to be conform to Him in the exercise of all their passions and affections. 2. It implyeth a likeness to Christs hatred in the nature thereof, that they hated them as they were hated by Christ; and not as they were enemies to them. *Observe*, It's a good way to square folks hatred and zeal so, as it degener not into passion: to look to the matter that it be such as is hated by Christ, and to the manner that it be such as He is, single, and zealous; and that it be on that account, because hateful to Him; otherwise, men may carnally and selfishly hate, but without commendation. 3. It implyeth also, that corrupt Doctrine is most hateful to Christ Jesus, and should be to His people.

*Vers. 7.* Followeth the conclusion: wherein we have two things. 1. A general advertisement, or exhortation common to, and repeated in, all the Epistles, *Let him that hath an ear hear.* 2. A particular promise for upstirring of them to wrestle and overcome, *To him that overcometh, will I give, &c.*

For the exhortation, it's shortly the Lords giving this watchword and warning to all that are in *Ephesus*, and all that should hear this Epistle, to observe what the Spirit saith to them.

1. Because, it's of *Ephesus* concernment as well as the Angels. 2. Because it is of particular Believers concernment as well as the Churches: therefore, He would have all hearers looking on it as particularly spoken to them. 3. Because usually all hear not. 4. Yet these that have ears should hear.

The scope implyeth these three Notes. 1. The Lord supponeth here, that every one this Word cometh unto, will not have hearing ears, they will not hear this Word so as to lay weight on it, and give themselves up to it. 2. It implyeth that folk that have any conviction, wakening, or life, fitting them for hearing, should especially be busie in improving the Word heard; *To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given, &c.* It would become

become Believers (what ever others do) to be busie laying up some promises, directions, reproofs, threatnings, &c. it's mainly for their use written and taught, to make the man of God perfect. 3. It implyeth that hearers would labour so to make use of the Word spoken (to whomsoever he be first spoken,) as if it were particularly and especially spoken to them; this being the excellency of the Word, that it contains in it many conditions, and suits many Generations, and some in this place, as well as in *Ephesus*.

2. The last and special part of the conclusion, is a promise, *To him that overcometh will I give, &c.* Wherein, 1. The party is described, to whom the promise is made, *To him that overcometh*, in the singular number: to point out that our Lord Jesus taketh notice not only of a Church that fights, but of every particular Believer in it. This description of the party, implyeth, 1. A case or exercise that these to whom the promise is made are supposed to be in, and it is that they are wrestling or fighting: these are the object of the promise. It implyeth, that Believers have difficulties to fight with, and a fighting life of it here away. 2. Their duty to fight and wrestle with these difficulties, outward and inward. 3. That there is an actual fighting according to their duty. 4. A victory, overcoming, a getting of their foot some way on these difficulties: a victory follows the wrestling to every Believer: what ever he be, that in the way of duty meets with difficulties, and setteth to, to overcome them, he shall get the victory: yea, fighting seriously, is some advancement in victory; therefore is it in the present sence, to the overcomer, or who is a overcoming: because fighting and victory are never separated, finally, in this case. 2. The promise made to the overcomers for their encouragement, is, *I shall give them to eat of the tree of life, &c.* It's an allusion to that tree planted in *Eden*, *Gen. 2. 3.* That tree was called *the tree of life, &c.* not for any physical efficacy that was in it, as Papists gloss here, (though God might have made it instrumental as a mean of it) therefore, when sin entred, there was no use of that tree; neither could it do any thing, but it was so called, to hold forth to *Adam* sacramentally the eternality of life, which he might expect by keeping the Covenant of Works; that tree was given him to signify, and seal up that life to him, upon condition of his obedience: and in allusion to it, *Christ* saith here, to the man that fighteth and overcometh, *I will make him partaker of eternal life*, not in any earthly Paradise, but in Heaven: for so Paradise is taken in the new Testament, *Luke 23. 43. This night shalt thou be with me in paradise.* By eating then of the tree of life, we mean heaven, with all the great advantages of it, especially *Jesus Christ* who

makes up that life to fallen sinners, which that tree could not do.

From this promise, *Observe*, That our Lord *Jesus* would have His followers cheerfull in their services: therefore He setteth a recompense in their view: not to make them mercenary and servile; but hearty and cheerful in their obedience, because they serve such a good Master. It's a great mistake in some, to say that looking to the reward maketh a soul servile; upon the contrary, it maketh a soul free and willing: and this is the ground of Gods giving promises of rewards; and the use which the Saints make of them, *Heb. 11. Moses* had respect to the recompence of reward, and it sweetned his cross, and made him cheerful in obedience.

2. From the particular promise He maketh, *Observe*, That there cannot be a greater promise nor encouragement for duty, than the happiness that God hath provided for His people in Heaven, when its rightly eyed: and the frequent laying down of this promise is for this end, to make Believers bear difficulties patiently, and wade through them willingly: a broader sight of Heaven, and Faith, and Hope strengthened, in expectation of it would make folks fight stoutly.

3. The thing he promises for their present sustaining, is heaven, as that which they might hope for after this life. *Observe* 1. That *Christ's* followers would spend their full life, till after this life; they would not expect an other life or heaven here. 2. The hope of heaven, should comfort wrestlers before it come. Believers, take your wrestling life here, and expect and look for a quiet life hereafter; and look not for it till then. *Christ* speaketh of the wrestling, as here, *To him that overcometh*; and of the victory, as in heaven, *I will give him to eat of the tree of life.* The not thinking rightly on this, maketh us so often grumble when we want satisfaction in the things of a world. We propose to our selves a quiet life, whereas the Word of God never promises quietness, and a compleat victory and triumph here; yet the time cometh, when wrestlers shall be conquerours over crosses and corruptions: and carnal men, who live now as Kings, without any fight, shall lye under wrath: there is no such promise made to them.

Before we proceed to any other of the Epistles, there are some things insinuated in this, the clearing whereof may be useful in many of the rest: we shall therefore take occasion to speak somewhat now, once for all, to these three. 1. To Church-government and Discipline in general. 2. To that relation which is betwixt a particular Minister and his Flock. And, 3. To the nature of the difference that is betwixt saving and common grace. All which will be useful for the understanding many things in these Epistles.

### I. Concerning Church-government and Discipline, in General.

**T**He matter of Discipline, is much insisted upon in these Epistles; and often the great weight of the commendations or reproofs that are given in them, is laid on this, as they were faithful or defective in the administration thereof: which doth certainly show, not only the lawfulness of a Church-government and Discipline; but also the usefulness and necessity thereof to the Church of *Christ* when faithfully exercised, as being a special mean and ordinance appointed by *Jesus Christ* for the edification thereof, and a thing that is not indifferent to her Officers to exerce or forbear at their pleasure, but lyeth on them to be discharged, as they would have *Christ's* commendation on the one side, and as they would eschew His sharp reproof on the other, and as they would prevent the offence and destruction, and promote the edification of the people over whom they watch, as they that must give account. It is therefore no wonder that the devil hath in all ages either

sought to oppose, or corrupt so excellent a mean of the Churches edification: he began even under heathen Emperours to traduce this Government, as inconsistent with civil Authority; and did provoke persecutors by nothing more then this, that *Christ* was accounted a King by Christians, and that accordingly they did keep distinct Courts under him, which the Politicians of the world did account inconsistent with Government, as may appear from the History of Primitive times, &c. the Apologies of Christians, particularly of *Origen* against *Celsus*, wherein he doth particularly and fully insist upon this. When the Lord had vindicated His Ordinance of Government (with all His other Ordinances,) the devil set himself to corrupt the same, and to pervert it in its nature, and divert it in its exercise from the appointed end of edifying the Church, to be an occasion of offence to her, and tyranny over her, by the many debates concerning precedency, which he stirred up after



The Churches freedom from heathenish persecution, till at last he brought Antichrist to tyrannize over the face of the visible Church, that thereby he might either make the Government hurtful or odious unto the members thereof and others. Even as in reference to the Doctrine of Christ, he did endeavour the corrupting thereof by error, when he could not altogether suppress the same. Again, when the Lord brought the light of the Gospel to publick, at the time of Reformation, and Antichrists tyranny is by many casten off, he seeketh by all means to effectuate one of these two, to wit, that either the Church should have no distinct Government at all, or that, at least, it should be of another form, and of another nature than is appointed in the Word. Hence it is, that there have ever been such debates in the Church concerning the Government and Discipline thereof, and even whether there be such a thing or not: And although the opposers thereof, do not professedly oppose the truth of the Gospel, nor intend confusion in the Church; yet hath it with it no little advantage to the Kingdom of Satan and prejudice to Christs.

For, 1. By this means Satan obscures the beauty and excellency of the Church of Christ, and draweth men to undervalue the same; as being at best but a refined piece of civil policy, as but subservient to politicke ends, and the upholding of temporal greatness of men in place. Hence it is, that we will find the most worldly-wise and poltrick men (that are least zealous ordinarily in things of God) to be the greatest favourers and abettors of this: and it is no wonder, seeing Christs way of Government, even as His Doctrine is foolishness to the wisdom of men: It's observable also, that where this opinion hath place, there is little account of any other ordinance; the Sacrament of the Lords Supper is prostituted promiscuously to all; the Ministry, is either accounted a thing indifferent, or Ministers made the servants of men, and arbitrarily to be put out or in, as they are pleasing or displeasing to them; and it is specially intended to curb free faithful speaking, and to be a snare to make them flatter Magistrates and powers. All which shew the undervaluing principle that this opinion doth proceed from.

2. This opinion hath ordinarily with it more licentiousness, and that both in Doctrine and Practice; for, necessarily, one of these two do follow: either many errors and scandals in practice are accounted light and not censurable at all; or, if that in way of reason be granted, yet in practice it is never performed. And can it ever be made out in any practice past, or possibly to come; that offences in People or Ministers have been so exactly taken notice of, and restrained, or removed, where Church-government hath been denied, as where it hath been in exercise?

3. Although such Magistrates might be found, as would take notice of every thing exactly; yet their meddling with it furthers not spiritual edification, so as the way of Church-government doth: for at best, it would make men but civil, and make Religion look like the way of ancient Philosophers, who pressed the rectifying of nature; whereas a Church-reproof or censure, hath both more edification to others, and more convincing shame to the parties themselves, in respect of the sin thereof, as flowing more immediately from Jesus Christ, and more directly representing to them His Authority, and their reckoning to him, who more singularly binds in heaven, what by His Officers is bound on earth. And we conceive, that even the prophaneft, in experience will finde this true, that a verball Church-censure (which considered of it self, is but light) will yet have more impression (as to the ends aforesaid) than sentences of a civil Magistrate, that in themselves may be heavier; and this will be, even when the parties in their outward carriage will seem to reverence the Magistrate, and to con-  
temn the Church.

4. Although it should be yet said, that Magistrates could make things more effectual, as in censuring of corrupt Ministers, and such like, which indeed is a benefit in it self to the Church, yet considering this manner of performing it, especially being compared with the performing thereof by the Churches own Authority, it proveth more disparaging unto the Church of Christ: because if Ministers and Church-members, should be apt to fall in scandalous offences, and yet the Church have no Authority, but what is extrinck for the remedying thereof, then is she apt to be looked upon as a sufferer of profanety, and as a nest to unclean persons of her self, if by the Magistrate, course were not taken with her: and although by his means such should be purged out, yet in the opinions of natural men this imputation sticks to the Church, as if such things and persons were well-consistent with her profession, and liked of by her special Officers and Members. Now censuring of these by their own Authority, doth fully and only vindicate her and them from these aspersions, which are frequent upon the out-breakings of such scandals in the mouths of many profane men. And this revenging of disobedience, and vindicating of the Church of Christ, is none of the least ends of this Church authority, which by no other power can be attained. And no question, the devil loves to have scandals breaking out in the Church, especially in her Officers, which do once put a blot upon her. And if it be to be taken notice of at all, he had rather that some other did it than the Church her self: because so the commendation becometh theirs, and the blot sticks to her: and thus (as it were) he proclames to all, what sort of persons would these Church-officers, and Church-members be, for all their profession, if they were not even as other men by some other hand restrained? and thus the wisdom and holiness of our Lord Jesus, is reflected on, as if He had approven corrupt mens designs, who love to have a blot on the Church; but not to have her vindicated from it: because by this, the Church is capable to give offences; but, in a incapacity, to remove them; or to vindicate her self from them: which standeth not with that zeal, which our Lord hath to His own glory in the Church. And certainly, it's not the punishing of faults simply, that vindicateth the Churches holiness; but it is the censuring of them in such a way as evidenceth the Churches abhorrency thereof, and doth it: otherwise, Christians and heathens living under one Commonwealth, might be supposed to have the same indignation at scandalous ills. And so the denying of the Churches Authority, if it doth not permit faults to be unpunished (at least all) yet it secludeth such a way of censuring them, as may vindicate the Church and Christ Jesus the King thereof in a singular manner: and (if we may so say) puts her; yea, the Lord Himself in their reverence, whether she shall be free of corrupt Teachers and Members or not? or whether she shall lye under that blot or not?

5. By the denying of this Ordinance, the other Ordinances which are acknowledged, are made weak and obstructed in their exercise. Concerning the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, it is clear: for, by this the rail whereby it is in a singular manner separated, is broken down; many Offices of the Church, as these of Elders and Deacons, are made void; and that of preaching, made contemptible or maimed. For, publick authoritative rebuking of all, and sometimes of some in particular, is a special part thereof. Now, where Church-government is denied, either the Minister must do it arbitrarily by himself, and so he is more liable to a snare, and the party-reproved to be stumbled, as having only to do with the Minister, who may partially proceed therein; or, it must be forborn, and so His Ministry be made obnoxious to despising, which by his rebuking, with all Authority, is to be prevented, and every way plainness and freedom, even in  
Preaching.

Preaching, especially towards these in place, is so far as can be, restrained.

6. By this, the Devil almeth still either to make Religion to suffer as a thing that men may carve on according to their interests, as in other matters of policy (therefore he mixeth all together) or, he doth continually lay grounds of jealousy and difference between Magistrates and Ministers; thereby to make, that Ministers and these who will be faithful, should either sinfully connive at what may prejudice the Kingdom of Christ, or by their testifying against the same, make themselves more odious to the Rulers: for, lay this once for a ground, that there is no Church-government but what the Magistrate hath, then either the Minister must say, that none ought to be admitted to Civil-government, but such as both for skill and conscience are fit to mannage the matters of Religion (which Civil States will not always be content with, neither often is it possible) or, they must account any man, who may be fit to mannage Civil things, fit also to mannage the Affairs of Christs House, which in conscience cannot alwayes be done, whereby necessarily, they must be brought in tops with Magistrates, except we say that either unskillfull Magistrates use not to be in place, or that such may yet be tender and dexterous in the manning of every Church matter that comes before them. And on the by, we may say, that feeling qualifications, fitting one for any place and Government, are simply called for in these who should supply the same (though sometime *de facto* they be not so qualified) and feeling special qualifications, are required for governing of the Church of Christ, which are not required in these that govern a Civil State, and will not be accounted simply necessary to them: It must therefore follow, that by the Lords Ordinance, these two Governments are not conjoynd in one person, feeling he hath not alwayes conjoynd the qualifications that are requisite for both. We shall insist no more in this: the reading of these Epistles will sufficiently shew how concerning this truth is: and although this controversy be abundantly cleared by the writings of many worthy men, that there needeth no more be said therein; yet, having such occasion from these Epistles, we shall, once for all, touch some things concerning Church-government, as it is holden forth therein: whereby we will find it clear. 1. That there is such a thing as Church-government, distinct and independent from the Civil. 2. Wherein it consisteth. And, 3. Who are the Subjects thereof. And, 4. We shall lay down some conclusions or observations concerning the same, as they may be gathered from the Text.

1. The Church of Christ is furnished with a Government and Authority within her self, for the ordering of her own affairs, trying and censuring of her own Members, and that immediately from Jesus Christ, distinct and independent from any Civil Government on earth. That there is such a thing as Government and Authority in her, is clear by these, 1. The practice of the Angel of *Ephesus*, in the trying and censuring of false Apostles, which cannot be done without Authority and Government. 2. This practice of theirs, is commended by our Lord Jesus: it can therefore be no usurpation in them. 3. In the Church of *Pergamos*, we will find the Angel reproved, that *they had them that held the Doctrine of the Nicolaitans, &c.* which doth suppose Authority in them, even to have censured and cut off these from their Society: for, if they had not had Authority to do it, it was not their duty to have done it; and if it had not been their duty to do it, our Lord Jesus had not reproved them for omitting it. 4. The Church of *Thyatira*, is reproved also for suffering the woman *Jezebel* to teach and seduce His Servants: which doth imply an Authority and Government, sitting them to whom he writeth; to have married and hindered her Preaching, and somewhat to have been in their power to have done, which was not done by them:

otherwise our Lord Jesus would not have so reproved them. The making out of these three will confirm this. 1. That the thing commended in *Ephesus*, and desiderated in the other two Churches, doth imply Authority and Power. 2. That this is in the Church as distinct and independent from any Civil Government. 3. That this is a thing perpetually belonging unto the visible Church, and was not temporary, as peculiar to that time.

That there is an Authority implied here, the considering of these three will make out. 1. If we consider what is commended in *Ephesus* and desiderated in the other two: the very expressions and acts do bear forth an Authority. As, 1. That is commended in *Ephesus*, *That they cannot bear them which are evil, but have tried false Apostles, and have found them liars.* All which hold forth a judicial way of proceeding and trying, which implieth a citing of such a party and witnesses, for the discovering of such and such things, according to the rule given to *Timothy*, 1 Tim. 5. 19. *Against an Elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses:* for, there can be no tryal without witnesses, there can be no witnesses without Power to call them, and exact an oath of them, that being the end of all strife, which cannot be done without Authority. The word added, *and hast found them liars*, doth confirm, that it is a judicial finding after tryal, whereby they decide.

1. In the general, that such and such things are evidences of false Apostles: and then in particular, that such and such things are found to be in them: and therefore that they are false Apostles, which presupponeth this tryal before they judicially pronounce; than which, nothing doth look more judicature-like. Which will be the more clear, if we consider, 1. That this trial and finding, proceedeth from their zeal, and not bearing with evil men; and therefore cannot be a tryal for private information. 2. It's a tryal, tending to the edification of the Church, and the preventing of that snare amongst the people, which no personal or private thing could effectuate. 3. It's a tryal and finding, opposite to what is reproved in *Pergamos* and *Thyatira*, and so such a process and sentence as rid that Church of them, which no private or personal act could do. 4. It's a proceeding and tryal, which relates to these directions, which *Paul* giveth to *Timothy* and *Titus*, as the concidency of the matter, scope and other circumstances, do demonstrate such, as, 1. *Receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses:* which is the ground of that which followeth, *Verf. 20. Them that sin, rebuke before all.* Now if that rebuke be an authoritative act (as cannot be denied, which yet is but the execution of the sentence that followeth the former tryal) then the tryal it self must be judicial and authoritative also; and therefore so must this tryal be here understood. To say that this is a Ministerial act, and that that tryal preceeding, is only the Ministers private act, for his own clearing, cannot be admitted: for, that tryal belongeth to many, as after will appear. 2. To whomsoever it be supposed to belong, it inferreth an authority to try, and so to convene and examine: otherwise that tryal might be made ineffectual: and so the party wanting authority, not to be chargeable with short-coming therein. Or, 3. This tryal must be commended to Church-officers without Authority to effectuate it, and so it will not be a mean suitable to the end. 4. Ministerial tryal and reproof, will not be enough to gain the end, and to make a corrupt Member to be no Member of such a Church, which is the thing desiderated in *Pergamos* and *Thyatira*. And considering the commendation of these Angels and Churches, it is not like that they were defective in their personal averfness from and rebuking of these Errors, and yet they are reproved as being defective: which must infer that they came short in respect of that judicial tryal and censure, which is here commended in *Ephesus*, as the considering of them will clear.



2. *Pergamos* reproof (*vers. 14. and 15.*) is, *Thou hast there them that hold the Doctrine of Balaam, and them that hold the Doctrine of the Nicolaitans*: the fault is, not that they approved that Doctrine or connived at it; for, they denied not the Faith; and *Antipas* is commended as a faithful Martyr amongst them: nor is it their fault, that such lived in the Town; or, as other Heathens might, did sometimes enter the Congregations: nor is His quarrel only against these *Nicolaitans* themselves, but against the Angel of the Church; because they had them in their Society as Members with them, and had not cut them off: and seeing this cutting off, is such a thing as made them cease to be Members of that body, and relateth to that which *Paul* wisheth to the troublers of the Church, *Gal. 5.* and commends to *Titus*, Chap. 3. *Him that is an Heretick, reject, &c.* it must imply an Authority and Power, without which this cannot be done, this un-Membering or un-Churching of a Person being a censure of highest concernment, and that same which we call excommunication; It followeth then, that this Church had that Power, and ought to have executed it against these corrupt Members, seeing her falling therein doth make her reprobable.

If it be said here that this doth imply no Authority and Power, but what is common to all Societies by the Law of Nations and Nature, such as companies of Chirurgeians, wrights, and suchlike, have in excluding men from their own Society: which yet is no distinct Authority, but subordinate to, and derived from the Magistrate?

We answer, 1. That even these Societies in these things act by Authority, however it be derived: and so the Argument holds, that the exclusion of Members from Church-communication, doth imply an Authority: and what is said of the necessity of such a thing by the Law of Nature and Nations, doth confirm the same: for, if every Society be furnished for the maintaining of it self by the Law of Nature, so must also the Church be; except we say that it is more defective than other Societies. Beside, even such Societies could not do such a thing, were not privileges granted them by Authority for that end.

2. We answer, That although the argument hold in the general, that there is an Authority necessary; yet will it not prove it to be dependent in the Church, as in these Societies it is. For, 1. The derivation of Authority from the Magistrate to these Societies, is clear: for, such and such Societies have that Power, because it is granted to them by the superiour Magistrate; and others want it, because it is not granted them: but I suppose none will plead for a derived Power to the Church from the Magistrate in this place: yea, the greatest opposers of Church-government, do acknowledge that it is not derived from him as *Lod. Mol. pag. 654.* There is no reason therefore that Church-government should be subordinate to Magistracy as other Societies are, which she exercises (as they speak) by a proper right and divine without delegation, *Jure proprio & divino, non delegato.* 2. The Magistrate may enter by his Authority such and such persons to the rights and privileges of such Societies and exclude others from them (though possibly it may be done unjustly) yet, was it ever heard of, that a Magistrate might privilege any with the privileges of Church-membership, or by his Authority un-Church any? The parallel therefore cannot be universal in these. 3. All other Societies as such, are parts of a Common-wealth, and together make up the body: and therefore in reason ought to be subordinate to the common Government; but the Church, as a Church, is no essential or integral part of a Common-wealth: there is therefore not the like reason for their subordination.

If any should yet except and say, that an Authority may be immediately from God; and not derived; and yet be by Him appointed to be subordinate to the civil Magistrate, as is instanced in that Power, that a Husband hath over the wife; or a Parent over his Children.

We Answer, 1. That it may be questioned, if a Parent, as a Parent, be subordinated to the Magistrate; although, as a man and member of the Common-wealth, he be: for, he may command his Children without any Authority from him: yea, contrary to the commands of Magistrates (and in some cases warrantably, suppose in their Marrying, adhering to the truth of God, &c.) neither can the Magistrate increase or diminish their power, although they may strengthen them, or mar them actually in the exercise thereof; yea, suppose a Parent to incline to match Son or Daughter in a way that is not sinfull or inconvenient; and for this end, to command them to give obedience: and again, suppose the Magistrate to command them otherways to march: The Magistrates command here, will not loose the Child from the Parents Authority: because, although both Parent and Child be the Magistrates subjects; yet their obedience is called for in reference to these things that belong to a Magistrate only. Hence that case of a Magistrates requiring one thing, and a Parents commanding of another to the same Child, is by Divines solved by this distinction, That in things belonging to the Magistrates command, the Child ought to be obedient to him in what concerns the duty of a subject; but in things that concern the duty of a Son properly, he is to be obedient to the Father, whatever the Magistrate command; which sheweth, that simply the commands of a Father, as a Father, are not subordinate to the Magistrate: and so that in reference to some persons, there may be two supream Powers, upon divers considerations, who may command without subordination one to another; and yet their Authority be no way inconsistent together.

2. We Answer, That although the Authority of Fathers and Husbands were subject to the civil Magistrate as such; yet can it not weaken this consequence, [If the Authority of the Church be not derived from the Magistrate, Then can it not be subordinate to him;] for, the Authority of Parent, Husband, &c. is personal and natural, that is, founded in nature: and therefore is derived by nature to Parents, Husbands, &c. And such, do not make a body of themselves, but are members of another greater body; whereas a Church, is a Society and incorporation, compleat in it self: and as such, is not founded on nature; but by Gods positive grant and foundation is such; and therefore Authority must be immediately derived to the Church by the same mean, (to wit, of a positive grant) by which its being as a Church is derived. And can it be instanced that there is any such, to wit, a compleat Incorporation, having immediate power from Christ for the governing of it self and shutting out of corrupt members without any derived power from the civil Magistrate, who yet, are subordinated to his power in the exercise of theirs. We grant indeed, that the Church, considered as subjects and members of the Common-wealth, are subject to him; but it will no way follow, that the Authority or Government wherewith she is furnished, as a Church, is to be subjected to him. Neither can this be thought strange; that a Church Judicatory, considered as such, should be accounted independent, as to the civil Magistrate, seeing we must either say, that a Minister, in his Ministerial and Pastoral duty, acteth by an Authority immediately from Christ, without any dependency on the civil Magistrate (which yet readily cannot be admitted in any other case, to wit, that a person should command without dependence on the Magistrate) Or, we must say, that the Minister preacherh and acteth in his Ministry, in the Magistrate's name mediately, and by his Authority, or by none at all: which I suppose, none will affirm. And what greater inconsistency is it with civil Power, to have distinct Authoritative Courts, than to have Rulers distinctly and Authoritatively commanding persons, especially themselves?

3. If we consider the Epistle to *Thyatira*, where much is com-

mended; yet there is a notwithstanding, and reproof cast in upon this account, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, that calleth her self a Prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants. This suffering, can be no defect in respect of civil Authority: for, that was not in their power, or is it any defect of any personal or private duty: because none such can impede other persons teaching, if willfully they will set themselves to it; nor can they be thought defective in that, that are so commended for Faith, Charity, Works, &c. and that even in respect of their thriving and growing in their private conditions: It must therefore be a suffering of her in so far as by Church Authority she was not censured and restrained, that thereby the seducing of Christs servants, might be prevented, whose edification is the end of this as of all other Ordinances: and so consequently, the Church of Christ is furnished with power and authority in reference to her own affairs and members.

2. This will also be clear by considering these who are primarily in this respect commended and reprov'd in these Epistles: it is not the body of private Christians; but the Church-officers, as peculiarly distinguished from them: so that these threatenings and reproofs, do otherwise belong to them, than to the Church, as we will find in the progress. And there can be no other reason given of this, but because these faults were the faults of these that had Authority to right them, and did it not: which will be more clear afterward, when we consider the subject of this power.

3. These acts, are either acts of private Christians, or personal acts the Ministers and Church-officers (both which, are already overturned by the fore-mentioned reasons) Or, it must be by some extraordinary act, as Peter's smiting of Ananias and Sapphira; or, it must be the exercise of some ordinary Power and Authority: there is no other thing conceivable; But none of the first three can be said. Not one of the first two, for the reasons given; nor the third, Because, 1. There is no warrant to look upon these Officers as furnished with that gift; nor was it ordinary to the Church, and her ordinary Officers, such as these were. 2. That would not attain the scope proposed here, which is, in part, the recovering of the offending party: therefore saith the Lord of Jezebel, ver. 21, 22. *I gave her space to repent*; and doth threaten her but conditionally: which sheweth, that He meant no such extraordinary cutting off of them. It remaineth then, that it must be the exercising of an ordinary Authority and Government: and therefore such must be in the Church.

The second thing to make out the Argument, is, that this Authority and Power in the Church, is distinct and independent from any civil Government; which from the Text, may thus appear. 1. The subject is distinct, to wit, Church-officers. 2. The object is distinct; to wit, the Church and the members thereof alone, and as such: it is not the inhabitants of Pergamos and Thyatira; but the Church-members that are under the same. 3. The matter falling under that cognition, is distinct, to wit, that which is hurtful to souls, as the seducing of Christs servants, and scandals, considered as such. 4. The censures inflicted, are different, to wit, no civil mulct upon estates, nor punishment upon bodies, nor cancelling of the freedom of the Burghships in Towns or such like; but seclusion from Church-privileges and membership. 5. The end is distinct, to wit, the reclaiming of the party offending, and the bringing of them to Repentance, and the preventing of soul-hurt to others; and the vindication of Christs name. 6. The manner is different; there is no external Pomp nor Power or force in the managing thereof, such as is in civil Governments; for, that is not here conceivable, considering the afflicted and persecuted condition of these Churches, but the sword of the mouth, and trial, and censures. And 7. They differ in their rise, civil Power being derived from Superiors to Inferiors; but

this hath no rise or derivation from any civil Power, although for the time these Cities and Nations wanted it not; but did arise from that intrinsic economic and power, which accompanies the very being of a Church, and which by Christs appointment doth reside in such a number of persons, considered as a Church, which did not reside in other inhabitants of the same Towns, nor did in these before this their Church-state. 8. The account, upon which, this Government doth consider persons and actions, is distinct from the civil: men are not considered as men, nor as in-dwellers in such and such Places onely; but as Christs servants: and actions, are not considered, either as profitable or hurtful to men simply; but as profitable or hurtful to their spiritual estate. And therefore, it is seducing of Christs Servants, and as such, the deeds of the Nicolaitans and Jezebel, are to be taken notice of by it.

2. We say, as it is a distinct Government from the civil; so it is independent as to it: and if the former be true, that there is an Authority and Government included here, and in the former respects exercised as distinct from the civil power then in being, it will also necessarily follow, that this Authority was independently exercised in reference to that civil power?

For, 1. There is no derivation of this Church-power, from that civil power, as is said. Therefore it cannot be dependent on it, seeing it neither did, nor could derive it. And although some except (as was hinted) that there may be a power in Fathers, Husbands, and other such natural relations, over Children, Wives, &c. which yet is dependent on the Magistrate; yet suppose that by the law of nature, Parents did combine in one Society and Government among themselves, as a Church doth, and in that case had a distinct Government, could that Authority and Government be accounted dependent, Seeing no Superior Authority could mar them in the exercise of their power without injustice, more than a Magistrate can mar a Father in the exercise of His Authority towards his Children when he doth it justly? So this Church-power, not being a personal privilege, but belonging to her as a body and Society of many members combining together, having that by the law of nature, as is granted (and we add, if Jesus Christ allowed them) she cannot therefore be marred by any Authority in the exercising of that Government, what ever unjust violence may do.

2. It appeareth to be independent in this, that there is a Church-government among Christians, even when Magistrates were setting themselves to undo the same: If then Government be necessary to the Church, and yet it be so ordered in the Lords providence that civil Government may be for hundreds of years enemies to the Church, as was in these Primitive times. Then it will follow, that the Church-government and Authority is not placed in the Magistrate, or civil Governments: because, in that case either she should have no Government at all (which by these Epistles will be found false) or she must have a Government and Authority destructive to her, which is contrary to the end thereof; or, in the last place, her Authority must be independent, save of Jesus Christ alone: and if it were not so, considering now that these to whom Christ writeth, were not civil Magistrates, there had been no such access to expostulate with them for their omission, if they might not have acted independently on them.

3. It may appear thus, that if the civil Magistrate cannot repeal by his Authority any of their sentences, then is their Authority independent as to him. Now, suppose a Church justly to degrade, or depose a false Teacher, or to cut off a rotten member; could any Magistrate by his Authority continue that man to be a Minister, or that member to be a Church-member, (what ever violence might do.) Suppose some Emperour (as in some cases Julian did) had taken the recognition of Ephesus sen-



tence against these false Apostles, and had declared it null? would not still their sentence have stood in force notwithstanding? Or suppose *Pergamos*, or *Thyatira*, had cut off *Jezebel* or the *Nicolaitans* from their Society, could any civil Magistrate, Heathen or Christian, have enacted them to be continued Church-members? And this doth not only flow from the injustice of the matter: for, suppose a Pro-consul had justly degraded some Judges of *Ephesus*; and the Town of *Ephesus*, had justly casten out some members from their Society; yet, by the Emperours interposing his Authority, as the supreme Magistrate, both might have been fully restored (though unjustly) so as they might have been really again Magistrates and Burgeses of such a City: which cannot be said in this case. No Emperours Authority could have constitute such (though unjustly) to have been Officers, or members, at all of these Churches. The difference then, (I say) cannot consist in the injustice of the matter alone; (for both are unjust) but it must consist in this, that civil sentences are subordinate to the supreme Magistrate, but Church sentences are not: although by violence they might have countenanced such and such persons, and have made the effects of the sentence in many things void; yet could their Authority have never reached to the formal removing of them, as in civil cases was hinted.

Thirdly, To make out the Argument, we say, that this distinct independent Power here mentioned, is a thing that agreeth to the Church in all Ages and conditions, and is not peculiar to any one time: as suppose, because the Church wanted Christian Magistrates at this time, it had been lawful to exercise Authority independent from them: which in other cases, where the Magistrate is Christian, is not to be granted. Therefore we say, 1. That which is attributed to these Churches here, agrees to them as Churches: and therefore to all Churches at all times: for the duties are common, and the hazards are common, to Churches at all times. Therefore this remedy of Church-discipline, must be perpetual also, it being the cure that is appointed for such a disease. And, that often repeated word, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches*, doth speak in all ages to the end of the World, as well as then. 2. If all other directions, exhortations, &c. in these Epistles, be perpetual and binding to the Church, to the end of the World, then this must be so also: and there can be no reason given why this is to be accounted temporary, more than the other: especially, considering that Christs sending of this Revelation, is for the good of His Servants unto the end of the World: and that especially, is aimed at in these Epistles, as the forced close doth confirm. It must then be injurious to Christs mind, to scrape out so much as concerneth Government, as not belonging to His Church for so many ages. 3. If the grounds, requiring the exercise of this power in the Churches, during this time, be perpetual, agreeing to all ages, Then it is not to be ascribed to the time of the Churches being under heathen Magistrates alone; But the grounds are perpetual: for, that is not because the Magistrate is a heathen; but that the person offending may be brought to repentance; and the seducing of others may be prevented: Now these ends are perpetual, which the Church is to study in all times: and seeing Church Authority and Government, is here holden forth, as a mean appointed by Jesus Christ for attaining of these ends, It must therefore be of perpetual use to the Church also.

Although these Truths be clear from the Word; yet there are some things, which are partly exceptions; partly objections, insisted on by Adversaries, which we shall speak a little to, as the nature of our intended purpose will permit.

A forced Author, pag. 545. doth confidently undervalue all Arguments to this purpose; and denieth all distinctness of Government in the Church by any Power distinct from that of

the Magistrates; and to maintain it, doth, 1. assert, That all sort of Power whatsoever, is supremely in the Magistrate, whether Heathen or Christian, by that place, *Rom. 13. 2.* he heaps up with many bigg words several absurdities that accompany (as he alledgeth) that opinion of a distinct Church-government, which he calleth invidiously the building of an Empire within an Empire. Yet, 3. He granteth, that where the Civil Magistrate taketh not on him the care of the Church, and maintaineth it not: in that case, by the Law of Nature and Nations, the Church cometh to have an Authority, or somewhat equivalent in the place of that, whereby she is qualified for the ordering of what concerneth her Members, during that case of such a Magistracy allanerly; and denyeth any other Authority to have been in the Church, during the time that these Epistles were written, but what was by voluntary confederacy, and association of Members amongst themselves: and therefore saith, That they had and exercised no less Authority, during that time, in Civil things: for which end, he maketh use of that place, *1 Cor. 6. 1, 2, &c.*

In reference to all which, we say, 1. That Authority cannot be denied here (however it be derived) seeing it is a Power to Excommunicate and Exauthorate Officers and Members which they assume, as he speaks, pag. 654. Yea, a Power equivalent to that of the Magistrates, because it's a Power adequate for the time to this end of governing the Church, pag. 545. And therefore, we say, if this confederating, or up-making of this Government, be a thing *jure* called for, and necessary to be done, for this end; it is the thing which we assert also; and, in respect of the particular circumstances, that is, what places or persons are to associate together, is to be regulated by Christian prudence; but if it meant of a voluntary association and confederacy, such as trades and crafts use in their Societies, as that alone which is the ground of this Power, This we altogether deny: Because, 1. If that confederating be called for, by the Law of Nature, Then it is not voluntary and free. And this Authority, is not grounded meerly upon voluntary confederating: because as it is not arbitrary to a converted Christian to be Baptized or not; so, being Baptized, it is not arbitrary to him whether to joyn with the Church or not. And being joyned, submitting to its Government, is a necessary duty to him. And it becometh not Authority to him: because he submits to it; but he is to submit to it, because it is Authority: and therefore supposing that these false Apostles, or *Jezebel*, or the *Nicolaitans*, had never consented to subject themselves to the Discipline of these Churches (as, by their taking such names of Apostles and Prophets to themselves, it's like they did never) yet notwithstanding had these Churches Authority over them, and it was their duty to submit unto them. 2. It's granted that the Authority that the Church hath in such a case, is equivalent to what the Magistrate hath and might exercise: and if it be not equivalent to this, then the Church of Christ under such Magistrates would not be so perfect as to their Church-state and well-being, as other ways: which cannot be said without wronging the wisdom of God, as if he had left His Church destitute of inward Power when he had least outward Protection; but if it be such a Power, it cannot be arbitrary and meerly grounded upon the confederacy; but must be authoritative upon an other account, and may authoritatively enjoin one to confederate: And so confederating, is not the ground that constitute the power: but a mean, making way for the exercise thereof. 3. If it were asked, *what evidence or proof could be given of such voluntary confederating in the Churches for that time?* It would be hard to show, that universally in all the Churches, there was such formal compacting actually agreed upon; and yet, that there was Government and Authority in them all, is evident. 4. Suppose confederacies to have been; yet could they never have constituted an Authority

thority and Government distinct, and Independent from the civil supream Power, especially while the supream Power opposed the same; as supposing (to keep the similitudes proposed) that many Chirurgicals and Tradesmen of any kind, did live under a Magistrate and Laws, which would admit no such, by their Authority to live and confederate under them, wilt any say that in that case, by voluntary confederating, they could assume an Authority to themselves; and censure any Person (especially against their will) without wronging and encroaching upon that Authority, under which they live? Yet it cannot be denied to a Church, and that without any prejudice to the Magistrate: because it in nothing lessens his Authority or withdraweth any thing from his cognition, which formerly used to belong unto him: but as the arising of a new Church within a Nation, hath with it new cases, actions, and considerations of persons, and deeds; so it is reason that it should have with it a new Authority to govern the same. 5. If the Church had another kind of interest, in reference to spiritual offences, than in reference to civil debates, then this confederacy cannot be the ground of such an Authority: this will not be denied according to the former principles, which do paralel both these in the primitive Church, and make this the proof of the former; But it's clear, that the Church-authority did far otherways reach Church-members in spiritual offences, than in civil things: which may thus be made out, 1. They might Excommunicate and un-Church for spiritual offences and for disobedience in these, if a brother did not hear the Church, and oft-times they did so; But it cannot be said, that if a brother had been disobedient to an arbitrary decree in civil things, that upon that account; they would have proceeded against him to Excommunication, and constrained him to have submitted: sure we are, it was never put in practice, at least till Antichrist arose. 2. In that Chapter, 1 Cor. 6. 7, and 8. the Apostle reasoneth for submission to this; and exhorteth Christians, so wronged, to suffer the wrong rather than to pursue it before Infidels: which doth suppose, that the Church was not furnished with Authority to redress civil wrongs, as she was to redress scandals. And therefore, *Matth. 18.* our Lord giveth order to proceed, in case of non-satisfaction, to the highest degree. And on the by, we may say, it is an odd thing to expound that place of *Matthew*, by this place of *Paul*. As if the Lord did onely there warrant a man to pursue injuries before heathen Judges, when he would not submit to the advice of Church-members, seeing expressly *Paul* enjoyneth them rather to suffer wrong, than to make the Gospel contemptible before Infidels by the contentions of Christians; which yet that exposition of *Matth. 18.* will approve of: which sheweth, that it must be understood to speak of Church-offences: in respect of which, *suffering* and *bearing* with them, is condemnable, as we see in these Epistles. 3. If what the Church did in civil things be common to any person or persons in any rank or condition whatsoever, and to Christians in any time and case, that is, that they may and should submit their differences to some; and these to whom they are submitted, may decide: And upon the other side, if what the Church exercised in reference to Ecclesiastick offences and censures, be not common, but so that no submission to others but such as are in power could warrant one to draw forth such censures as are here mentioned, (yea according to the principles which we oppose, it were not lawful for Christians to do so now in civil things; for, they say it's not lawful to do now in Church-things, as these did at that time.) Then the Churches Authority was not equal in civil things, as in spiritual things: And so consequently, no confederacy can warrantably ground this Church Authority; But the former, we conceive, is clear: Therefore, &c. 4. It may be clear by this, that the Church did never exact civil mulcts or inflict bodily punishments: which sheweth abundantly, that

she did not exerce Authority in civil things equally as in spiritual: and yet had her Authority been only grounded on the voluntary confederacy, she might have inflicted the one, as well as the other. 5. Suppose a Church-member had wronged an Heathen by his miscarriage; No question, Church-discipline would have reached him: which is not the intent of that, 1 Cor. 6. Therefore that cannot be the ground of their Power alone. 6. That direction, *Matth. 18. Tell the Church*, was given, before this was written: seeing then, this is the foundation of civil association, as is pretended, That of *Matth. 18.* must be of another kind. 7. This opinion will infer the setting up of a civil Power in civil things, where the Magistrate is not Christian; yet, that was never asserted by any. 8. The Adversaries themselves grant, that in such cases, the Church may do much more in Church-matters, than in civil: because that the Magistrate doth allow his power to rectifie civil things; and yet, this doth make both equally lawful. 9. Suppose the Magistrate had repealed a sentence, past in civil things; no question, it had bound them, though it had been unjust; Yet supposing he had repealed one of their Church censures, and declared excommunication void, It had not done so; nor had been acknowledged: yea, had he inhibited them to decide a particular in civil things, they would not have proceeded; but when he did inhibit censures, notwithstanding, they did proceed, and actually did suffer Martyrdom upon that account: which, in a civil action, I suppose they would not have done. 10. That, 1 Cor. 6. admitted any to be Judge that men submitted unto, or had wisdom; But Church-things were governed only by these who by office were Rulers. All which do shew the vanity of that assertion, that they equally meddled with both kinds, and yet, this one thing, is the ground of all that is said to evert this Authority. Add that, 1 Cor. 6. the parties offending are reproved for going to him; here, the Church-officers, for not censuring these that offended: which supposeth a power to be in them. And it cannot be thought, that the Angels had been so censurable, had they not decided civil busineses, as for this.

Beside (pag. 548.) He denies that there was a necessity of obedience in civil things: which yet clearly, is here asserted in these Church censures. Whereas it is said, as a further evidence, that the Churches Authority during this time was onely built upon this voluntary confederacy, that after supream Magistrates became Christian, they did intermeddle with all Church power without any contradiction (pag. 544.) It is either a meer mistake or an untruth: a mistake in this, that it accounteth their meddling in a civil way with many things, which the Church still meddled-with as formerly, and adding of their civil sanction thereto, for strengthening, not for diminishing the Churches power; to be an assuming of Church Power and Authority, which are things most distinct; even as a Christian Magistrate, doth command the Son of a Christian Parent to do the same things, which his Parent doth command him in reference to the Christian Religion, which a heathen Magistrate did not; yet is the Parents power and authority over his Son no less than when the Magistrate was heathen, because the Magistrates command is not privative; but cumulative to the Parents Authority: even so is it here. And there can be no greater reason to say that Church Power and Authority over Christians, did cease in spiritual things after *Constantine* became a Christian, than to say that the Power and Authority of a Christian Parent, and a Christian Master, did expire at that time. And seeing it is granted, that Church power, and Parental power, are both immediately from God, without any mediate derivation by the Magistrate; It is reason that they should be of equal duration and continuance also. And in matter of fact it is clear, that the Church continued to exercise the same power, which formerly she did; and also that the Magistrate concurred



red in his station for the strengthening thereof: and there is not the least shadow for any delegation after that, more than formerly; But, that now by the approbation of civil Authority, the Church had access to do that, for which before that time she was persecuted, even as there was full liberty given to Preach the Gospel, which formerly was inhibited: yet, none will say, that that power of the key of Doctrine, was derived from the Magistrate. For, what is alledged of the Emperours calling of Councils, That will prove him to have put them to the exercise of their power; but not that it was derived from him, more than when before that time Provincial Councils were called by some eminent Bishops, it will prove that their Call did authorize them, But rather both these Calls do suppose Authority to be before in these that are called. And therefore there is no question, that if *Constantine* had called others than Church-officers, to judge and censure in reference to these differences Ecclesiastically, he could not have derived Authority to them, so as to have made them equally Rulers, and with the same Authority as if they had been Church-members and Officers: which yet might have been done, if their Authority had resided in him alone. Beside, he commanded the preaching of the Gospel also, as is said.

Whence we may see that Christian Magistrates, did not meddle with that Power and Authority, which formerly resided in the Church: neither ever was it heard of, that a Magistrate did excommunicate, authorize or ordain a Minister, and such like, wherein Church-power is exercised. And though it be said that he doth these things mediately, by putting the Church to it, and by calling Church-officers to consult in Ecclesiastick things, which he doth confirm by his Authority, even as he doth govern other Societies, as Physicians, Lawyers, &c. by Authorizing some of their own number to manage what concerneth such Callings and Functions (in which respect, say some, the Function is different from the Magistrate,) Yet he is not the Lawyer, nor the Physician, more than he is the Minister; but the Authority is on him alone. To this we say, 1. That the parallel, is most unequal: because although a Magistrate be not by his station a Physician, or Lawyer; yet supposing him to have skill, he might lawfully do any act incumbent to these Stations: which doth indeed show, that the same Authority, whereby they act, doth reside in him: but suppose he had the Theorie of Ecclesiastick things, and skill in them; yet he might not step to himself, to act the acts of a Ministeriall Function; nor as a Magistrate, to sentence with Church sentences, Administer Sacraments, as he might do in the sentences of inferior Magistrates and Courts: which doth shew, that that Authority doth not reside in him. 2. We grant that he may be said to govern mediately, as he may be said to Teach and Preach mediately (for, he ought to provide for that) But that will not infer that the Authority of Preaching is derived from him: yet, no way doth the weight of this controversie so much ly on matters of fact, what Churches or Magistrates did since the Apostles dayes, as by what right and warrant they did what they did.

This last assertion therefore although made out, could prove nothing without the former; nor will the instancing of exorbitancies in Church-governours, infer any nullity of that Power, more than the enumerating of miscarriages of men in civil place, will enervate that ordinance of God: yea, we are sure much ill hath come by Magistrates intrusion in the Church Power, and many have miscarried in it; much lesse will heaps of slanders against most faithful men do it, whom God eminently countenanced, and who, singularly by suffering were honoured to testify for Him, such as Mr. *Wilb*, Mr. *Melvil*, Mr. *Davidson* and others, who, we are persuaded, in the great Day, will be as bold in reference to their being approved in their stations, as any of their opposers or traducers on this account. This way

of writing, will not be found to proceed from zeal for the Lord, which hath so little respect to such who eminently adhered to him; and let these traducers of His Ordinances and Servants prepare for giving account for both to Him, to which we leave them.

For the absurdities wherewith he doth load this truth, they being for substance the same which often have been fully wiped away, we shall only say these two, 1. That either they are no absurdities; Or, 2. Not such as the grounds acknowledged by him will infer. For, 1. It is no absurdity simply, that a man in diverse considerations should be subject to diverse co-ordinate powers, as a son is to the Magistrate as a Member of the commonwealth, to his parent as a child and member of the family: and in some things (as formerly hinted at) he is so obliged to be subject to the parent, that no command of a Superiour can loose him from it; & in other things, so subordinated to the Magistrate, that therein the parents authority hath no place. And the same may be seen in wives, who, in some things, are subject to their husbands commands, and no Authority can warrant them to do otherwise. 2. We say, that this same absurdity might have been instanced in these Churches, that the Lord writes to, suppose (as he doth in the other case) that the Magistrate had appointed some, whom the Church had called to her Synods (as for example, to that mentioned, *Acts 15.*) to some other civil employment, as they were subjects; would not the same absurdity of the interferring of the two Authorities have followed? he must either then say that such a case was not conceivable in these times, or he must say the absurdity must be evited, or it will be fastened upon the way approved by the holy Ghost, as the Churches governing of her self distinctly is granted to be, at least during such a case: and when he loses and vindicates his own concession, it will be easie to answer his objection. 3. It cannot be denied but that a Minister may independently command a Magistrate in the Name of Christ according to the Word, and that not only by reason of the matter, as an other private subject may do; but by vertue of his Office and Authority: in which respect he is not only a reporter, to tell what is Truth, but a Messenger and Herald authorized to charge all hearers to the obedience thereof, as *John* the Baptist did *Herod*, who in some respect might be subject to *Herod*, as in other respects *Herod* was to him: and if this be no absurdity in reference to particular Governours, why should it be thought absurd in reference to the Powers by which these govern? Supream Church Power then, and Supream Civil power in distinct persons, cannot be absurd. And we suppose there can be no Authoritative Officer, that upon any civil account can independently command the Civil Magistrate: Church-power therefore is not to be regulated in every thing; as the Civil is. It's strange to say that it's lawfull to a Magistrate to receive Ministeriall injunctions, or not as he pleaseth, or at least no more than a sick person is subject to the Physician, can it be said that a sent Minister can have no more Authority in prescribing duty in the name of Christ, than a Physician in giving directions for health? Or, will it be thought equally finisll or lawfull, to disobey the directions of the one as of the other, even laying aside the matter? or, shall every one, skilfull in Divinity, be counted of equall Authority with a Minister, as the counsel of one that is skilfull in Medicine, is to be counted of the same weight, as if he were a graduat Physician, if his reasons be as weighty? or, is there any exception of some, more than others from Ministeriall power, because of any outward place or grandour? These things can hardly be conceived without wronging the Ordinances of Christ. 4. It's thought absurd to say that a Magistrate is not blindly to act according to Church conclusions and determinations but deliberately to try his own act; and yet not to be the proper Judge thereof. It cannot be denied, that a Minister is to try and judge of what commands the Magistrate

shall lay on him in reference to his duty : if therefore the Magistrate's subsequent judgement, did demonstrate him to be supream in Ecclesiastick things, the same will prove the Magistrate's judgement in the case foresaid to be subordinate to the Ministers : that therefore is no absurdity. 5. An Ambassadour from one King to another, or to some inferiour Magistrate, is in his personall carriage subject to the Authority within whose bounds he is ; but as an Ambassadour in the following of his Commission and instructions, and as such, he is only countable to these that sent him : and never was it heard that one subjected his Ambassadour to the Authority of those to whom he was sent, even amongst men, But that was reserved at least, for some others appointed for that end by him : neither doth a Magistrate account an Ambassadours independency on him to be inconsistent with his Authority. Now Ministers being Ambassadours sent by Christ to Magistrates as to others, we must either say these to whom they are sent, must judge when they faithfully exerce their Commission or not, in their Masters name : which is absurd amongst men, and could not but look partiall like ; or we must say, they are not countable or censurable on earth ; or, that Christ hath intrusted His Ambassadours and Church officers with this power of censuring men, who shall walk unworthy of their Trust.

It it be said that an Ambassadour is no Magistrate, and hath but an instructed power ?

Ans<sup>r</sup>. Yet is it a power, and in that respect such as Church-officers have : and suppose there were a plurality of Ambassadours for a King or State within the Dominions of another, instructed to act joyntly for his affairs, and to censure any of their own number, or retinue, that should walk unworthy of their place ; would any Magistrate think that these wronged his power ; if they shut some from their fellowship without his warrand ? or could he claim to recognosce their deed ; although in a criminal case, he only might have accesse to punish even their members in that place ?

For that qualification of his concession, which is to allow this confederate Authority only to the Church that lived under such a Magistrate, as doth not undertake the care thereof ; we suppose it will not be easie to free it of absurdities, if this distinct Government be not acknowledged to be perpetuall.

For, 1. Do not the same Scriptures ( that place all Authority in the Christian Magistrate ; and require absolute obedience from his Subjects to him ) in the same manner belong to any Magistrate, as a Magistrate, and his Subjects under him, and particularly that place, *Rom. 13.* And suppose the Magistrate should not assume that power, and put it in exercise ; yet if Ecclesiastick power be in that same gift committed to the Magistrate with the civil power, no private persons could upon any pretext meddle therewith. For suppose the Magistrate should abstain to punish some kind of Murders, Witchcrafts, &c. no private persons could confederate themselves to assume a power of punishing these : because civil power to punish these things, is not committed to them ; but to the Magistrate. If then the Church might censure scandals, without incroaching upon these Scriptures at that time, Why may it not do so even when the Magistrate is Christian ? This Church power then cannot be understood to be comprehended under the Magistrates Commission, seeing *Paul* is exercising it, even while he is extending to the utmost the Magistrates Commission in all things, and quarrelling Christians for encroaching upon any thing due to him ; and no question he knew best the extent of these directions.

2. There is no Magistrate, who will professedly disclaim the charge and Government of any people ; although in practice many of them prove negligent of the Church of Christ. Now it may be asked, if this necessity of confederating for exercising of Church-authority doth ly upon the Church only when the

Magistrate is professedly Heathen, or if also when Erroneous or Atheisticall and Prophane, or in practice negligent and careless ( like *Gallio* ) in what concerneth the Church ? It cannot be astricted to the first : because the Church is no more obliged to an Erroneous Magistrate, then to a prophane and careless Magistrate ( though he be not professedly an Heretick or Erroneous ) if that Authority be not improved for them : and so according to these principles, the Church is to confederate and exercise Authority within her self, even then : which will come to this, that the Church is called to assume this Authority, except in such cases as the Magistrate doth take it on him and exercise it for her good, ( for if he exercise it to her hurt, it is better to want it ) and so it will turn near to this, that the Church is to assume this power, save where the Magistrate is Godly, and according to conscience doth exercise his power for her good. And then it may be asked, ( supposing that the Magistrate professe willingness to govern the Church, ) how shall it be judged whether such and such a Magistrate be to be admitted to Govern ? or, whether they be to assume Government to themselves ? It will come to this, that it must rest in the judgement of discretion of these private Christians, whether they will admit the Magistrate to Govern, or not ? And according to the principles of that Author, if they judge him according to their light, to be one that taketh no care of the Church, they should assume that power to themselves : for elsewhere he affirmeth the judgement of discretion to be the great decider ; and that a man had better do according to the light of an erring Conscience, than against it.

Yea, 3. According to his grounds, they may not only assume power in Ecclesiastick things ; but equally in civil things also. And will he say, that the Church of *France* may take power in civil things, as they do in Ecclesiastick, and not wrong the Magistrate ? Or, can it be said that this is a priviledge to the Magistrate, which makes him so to depend both in things Ecclesiastick and Civil upon a Peoples estimation of him ?

4. By these grounds, either a Church should never assume power under any Magistrate however careless and profane, and so as is granted, wrong her self, contrary to the law of nature ; or by assuming power, they declare that they account the Magistrate a Heathen, Erroneous or Atheisticall, &c. and is not that a greater irritation, and probable occasion of division betwixt the Magistrate and Church, than to continue this power distinct under all Magistrates equally ? And truly it looketh not like Gods Ordinance, that putteth His Church oftentimes in this strait, that it must either suffer prejudice, or disclaime and provoke the Magistrate so as to account him an Atheist unworthy of Government ; but to have forfeited so much of his Power, &c. And suppose a profane son succeed in the Magistracie to a gracious father, or profane men be chosen to succeed others who bare rule before them even in Church-affairs, ( which case is often incident ) what strait would it be to the Church either to continue to be governed by the Magistrate as formerly ? or, with so much disadvantage upon personall considerations, to assume a power which formerly they did not ?

5. Either the Church assumeth that power contrary to the Magistrate's command ; and so there is clear ground of a Persecution and War ; or, it is with his good will, or, at least, permission ; and that must presuppose this, that he doth account himself Heathen, Erroneous or profane, which cannot easily be expected, especially from a man not so denied and mortified, as such a Magistrate is supposed to be : for, delegated it cannot be, seeing in that case this assuming of Authority is not called for.

6. It may be asked, what degree of erroneoussesse, profanity, or carelesnesse in a Magistrate, may warrand a Church to assume this power : seeing even amongst heathens there are degrees ? and if so, then how shall that be judged ? Suppose a Christian Magistrate should neglect Church affairs, otherwise than as they



fall within the compasse of civil Government: in which respect Heathens did own them? or suppose he should own some sentences, punish some scandals, which, it seemeth *Aurelian* did in expelling *Samofatenus*, and *Severus*, in commanding to give again to the Church a place where they used to meet, that some Rogues had violently put them from, saying, that it was fitter that God should be worshipped there, than that it should be employed for such an use. Now, what is called for in such a case, might be a debate; whether might nor such Heathens be accounted to take care of the Church, and so it became not these Primitive Christians to have retained power during their reigns? or, what may be thought of Christian Magistrates that do no more, and, it may be, lesse than these? whether are these to be retained or not?

7. It may be asked in such cases, whether is explicit confederating for that end necessary or not? and suppose some would not submit willingly, How could they be compelled? Or, if so, were they lyable to no censure, because of their obstinacy? It were good that these things were cleared, if it be supposed that this be a practicable thing, and often to be practised.

It is further said, *That the Churches greatest hazard, is from the great power of Church-men, and not of the civil Magistrate, as experience sheweth: therefore it's dangerous to give them power.* *Ans.* So the greatest danger of Errour, is from Church Teachers: shall they therefore have no Teachers? So the greatest hazard of tyrannie to a State in civil things, is from a civil Government: is it not therefore to be allowed? Yea, this is the reason of it, that corrupt Church-officers wrong the Church most, and that both in Government and Doctrine: because in both they come nearest Her heart: and therefore when they miscarry, it cannot be but worse than when an Authority more extrinseck doth miscarry; and by their Power, they had ever greatest access to do her good or evill: and this rather confirmeth what was said, That properly the Power doth belong to her, and had need to be well mannaged, because *corruptio optimi est pessima*. But was it ever heard of, that Church Authority, well mannaged, did hurt to the Church or State either, under what ever Magistrate? It followeth only that the abuse of Church Power is ill, But no more.

2. We come now in the second place to consider wherein this Authority is exercised: which we shall speak to only in so far as these Epistles give ground, and we will find it to be in these four.

1. There is a *Triall*, *thou hast tried them that call themselves Apostles, &c.* which triall inferreth Authority to cite and warn parties, to call and examine witnesses, *1 Tim. 5. 19.* to take Oaths; which is requisite to triall and witnessing, as that alone which putteth an end to strife amongst men, *Heb. 6.* Therefore, *Mat. 18.* the Lord giveth the same rule concerning procedor by witnessing in the Church, which *Moses* gave in reference to all Courts, *That out of the mouth of two or three witnesses, &c.* shall every matter be established. This sheweth also, that they may receive the complaints of offended Brethren, (as is in *Mat. 18.*) keep meetings for that end, lead inquiry upon the crying fame of offences (as is like they did in this case of *Ephesus*) and in a word, do every thing that is needfull for compleating triall: for where the end is approved, the means that are necessary to the attaining thereof must be approved also.

2. There is a Power here to judge and determine, *thou hast found them liars*: which doth respect these two, 1. The nature of offences: they must judge what is truth and what error; otherways they can not tell who is a false Apostle and who a liar; and they must judge what is, scandalous in practice, and so what is lawful or not; otherways they can make no progress in trial or censure: for they must find such a thing to be an error or scandal, and so not be suffered in the Church. 2. It

hath reference to persons: there is a Power in judging such and such persons to be guilty, whereby they pronounce not only such Doctrine to be erroneous, but such a Minister or person to be guilty thereof, as is clear from the Text, and so must judge what is proven or not, and every thing tending to that, as citing witnesses and parties, hearing exceptions and answers, &c.

3. There is a Power of censuring a person found guilty. These words, *thou canst not bear them, &c. thou hast them, and sufferest them*, do import that, as is cleared: this having of them, implying a fault, which was, that by their Authority such were not cut off from the Church: which is the highest degree of ordinary censures; for if it be a priviledge and benefit to be admitted to the visible Church, and the Ordinances of Jesus Christ therein, it cannot but be a high degree of censure to be cut off from both: and yet this is implied here to be in the Power of these Churches, and they cannot be conceived to have cutted off such from their society so as not to have had them or suffered them to remain therein, but by this which we call Excommunication. From which necessarily this followeth, that not only the Church hath a Power of censuring; but particularly of censuring thus, by cutting off one from Church-membership, and from the priviledges of the external Ordinances thereof: this is called by our Lord Jesus, *Matth. 18.* an accounting of one a heathen and a publicane, *1 Corinth. 5. 13.* a putting away of the wicked person from among them; a cutting off of troubleshooters, *Gal. 5. 12.* and (*Titus 3. 10.*) a rejecting of them. There is nothing almost more frequently and clearly held forth in Scripture than this, both in Doctrine and practice. The Lord hath furnished His Church with this Power to censure, that He may preserve a Majestie in His Ordinances, which appear to the most part but foolishnesse and weaknesse; and that He may have weapons of His own kind, to batter down the proud imaginations of Church-Members, and revenge all disobedience, as the Apostle speaketh, *2 Corinth. 10. 6.* for which cause, he calleth it a rod, *1 Corinth. 4. 21.* and a punishment, *2 Corinth. 2. 6.*

4. There is here a Power of ordering and making Laws of what concerneth the affairs of the Church, as may be gathered, 1. From this, that they try Officers: whereby it is apparent, that the Church had her Laws in reference to the admission of Ministers, before they could be accounted such; and that these who were found by their trial, to be liars, should not be accounted Apostles, or Church-officers: otherwise Authority, in the former respects, would be maimed and defective. 2. It may be gathered from this, that they might conclude what was offensive, and what not, who was to be tried, and upon what grounds, when the trial was to proceed; who and what was to be suffered in the Church, and what not; who might Preach, and what might be Preached; and in every thing that concerneth Doctrine, Worship, and Order, according to the rule of the Word, and the great end of the Ordinances, to wit, the edification of the People: beside which, there is no Church Authority any where, it being a Power indeed, but a Power given for edification, and not to destruction, *2 Cor. 10. 8.* and *13. 10.* This Power being exercised, maketh decrees: therefore such acts are called, (*Act. 16. 4.*) *The decrees that were ordained of the Apostles and Elders*; and by Paul, a settling of things in order, *1 Cor. 11. 34.* And (*1 Cor. 16.* such were contributions for the poor, orderliness for preventing of confusions in Preaching and Hearing; calling of the people to Fasts, as *Act. 12. 5.* and *13. 3.* and Chap. *14. 23.* &c. trying, proving, admitting, or censuring of Officers, and such like, as in the Epistles of Paul to Timothy and Titus, are clear.

The third thing we are to enquire for in these words, is, who are the proper, and first subject of this Authority and Power? And we Answer, 1. negatively.

1. The civil Magistrate, is not the subject of this Power: for they to whom Christ writeth these Epistles, are the subject of

this Power : But the civil Magistrate is not the party to whom Christ writteth these Epistles, as is clear, and incan be alieadged by none : Therefore it is clear, that the civil Magistrate is not the subject of this Church Power. Yet, no question, our Lord Jesus knew best to whom it belonged : neither is it like, when he accounts them to have Authority, that he doth account them to have it from volunary confederating for the time : for, he accounts their neglect of the practice of it, to be a sin, against the breach of their duty ; even as He quarrelleth with the Angel of *Sardis* for being defective in the Doctrinall part of his Ministry ; and He commendeth the Angel of *Ephesus* for his labour in Doctrine, zeal, and Discipline, as duties equally belonging to the Ministry upon one and the same account. And it must either be said that a Magistrate, in his Election to be a Magistrate over a Church, is necessarily to be qualified in reference to these affairs ; or, that the Government thereof, doth not belong unto him ; Or, that one may be called of God warrantably to a Government over a Society, and that in respect of things and persons of no lesse concernment than the civil State ; and yet it not be necessary that he should be qualified in reference thereunto : which is absurd.

2. We say, that it is not the body and community of the Church and People to whom this Power is committed : which appeareth thus, 1. By the same Argument, these are the subject of this Power to whom Christ principally directeth His Epistles, whom He commendeth for the exercising of this Power, and reproveth for the omitting thereof ; But these are Church-officers, contradistinguished from the rest of the Church, as appeareth not only by the common Inscription, *unto the Angel of the Church, &c.* whereby they are distinctly considered ; but also Chap. 2. *Vers. 5.* where the Church is distinguished from the Angel in the threatening, *I will remove thy Candlestick, &c.* which saith, that what He had spoken in the former commendation of that triall, did peculiarly belong to the Angel, whom He considereth as distinct from the Church, spoken of under the terme of *Candlestick*. Also, in the Epistle to *Thyatira*, the Officers are especially reprov'd, as appeareth from *vers. 24.* But unto you I say, &c. that is, the Church-officers to whom He had been formerly speaking ; and to the rest in *Thyatira*, that is, the members, as distinct from them. It is hinted also, in the Epistle to *Pergamos*, as the exposition thereof cleareth ; and no where in any of these Epistles is that distinction so clear, as in these, where He speaketh of the exercise of this Power : thereby the more clearly to shew where it resideth. And though it be said in the close, *Let him that hath ears, hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches :* yet, that is, not to extend every thing equally to all the members : for, then the Ministry of the Doctrine, would be common to all also. It is therefore to be understood with respect to their places and stations, as was said in our entry to speak upon the second Chapter. 2. The Church here, is divided in *Angels and Candlesticks*, that is, Officers and Members. Now, we must either give the Power to the whole, that are comprehended under the titles of *Angels*, that is, Officers ; and *Candlesticks*, that is, Churches and Members ; or, we must give it to the Officers alone, as distinct from the Churches : for there is no warrant to give it to the *Angels*, and to some of the Church-members, and not to all : for, that were again to subdivide the Church, as if all its members were not (as to government) of one rank, contrary to the way kept here. And indeed we know no other reason more palpable, why the Officers and Members of the Church, are so distinctly set forth ; but that their distinctness in this respect might be held forth : But the first cannot be said, that all come in equally in Government, who are members : because that would take in Women and Children. Therefore it must belong to the Officers, as distinct from the other, when, seeing much of this Church-power, is conversant about things of that nature, as trying of false Apostles,

corrupt Doctrine, &c. which do require both fitness of qualification, and continuance in respect of time, and painfulness, beyond that which alwayes Church-members use, or, are called to have in respect of the one, or can bestow in respect of the other. And seeing these are certain Truths, that these who are ordinarily called of God to the exercise of any Authority, are to be fitted for it, and patiently to follow the tryall (for here these who are to censure, are also to try,) It will follow therefore that this power in such things cannot be thought to be committed unto the body of the People : especially, if we consider these two. 1. That in the choice, even of a Deacon, there is such exactness required in the trial of his qualifications, and authority to his admission to that Office : yet the power of Governing, doth not belong to this Officer, as such ; but he is inferiour to that. Now if it be supposed that the people generally have interest in Government and Ruling : Then it will follow, 1. That there are more qualifications required in a Deacon, which as such, is but a service, than there is required in these that Govern in the highest things. And, 2. That to be a member of the visible Church, hath more Authority in it, than to be a Deacon, at least than a Deacon can have as such : because the one Governeth by Authority in the highest things, and the other as such but serveth : And by the Institution and rules for the Election of Deacons, it would seem that there is by that Office an accession of somewhat to them, like Authority, more than they had before, or other members have : and seeing this accession hath no Authority with it, It will seem strange to say, that a Church-member, that is overseen by an ordinary Deacon, hath Authority in him, which the Deacon, as such, hath not.

In the second place we may add this consideration, That it is simply impossible for all Church-members (even the generality of them) to understand many questions that may be agitated ; yea, we may say further, they are not called to understand them ; and again, others cannot possibly give their attendance for the trial of intricat things, which may draw a great length. For it is asserted by learned *Thomas Hooker* of New England, part. 3. chap. 3. pag. 36. and 37. *That the preparation, is to be made by the Elders, because the body of the People, if numerous, they will be unable with any comely conveniency to consider and weigh all the circumstances with all the emergent difficulties, which will certainly and necessarily occur in such agitations, nor can in reason bestow their time and pains upon them, as the intricacie and perplexity of the work will sometime require.* Thus far he, which doth certainly render it at least exceeding suspicious, that they should be intrusted with Authority to judge and determine, who cannot possibly wait on the triall, especially, considering that in all Judges and Governments, mentioned in the Scripture ; and particularly in these Epistles, these two are joyned together, to wit, triall and censure.

3. We say, that it is not one person or Church-officer above other Church-officers, to whom this Power and Authority is committed. Because, 1. It is to the Officers who are contradistinguished from the People, and are not comprehended under the title *Candlestick of Church* ; But that must be understood of all Ministers, and not of one only. 2. By this one *Angel* collectively taken, many Rulers governing one Body in an associated manner, are to be understood as was cleared, chap. 1. *vers. 20.*

And therefore, 4. The associated number of ruling Church-officers, is the proper subject of this Church-power : because it is to them that Christ directeth these Epistles under this name *Angel*, as was shewn, Chap. 1. *vers. 20.* It is these He commendeth and reproveth ; it is those to whom the oversight of the People belongeth in reference to these matters, *Acts 20. 28. &c.* It is these to whom the power of trial and admission of Church-officers pertaineth, *1 Tim. 4. 14.* which is the work here commended in *Ephesus*. And if this be true, that by *Angel* here is



to be understood a plurality of united Church-rulers, as was said. Then this assertion laid down will also follow: for, no other rests to lay claim to this Authority.

To close then, in the fourth place, we may shortly lay down these conclusions further from these Epistles, 1. That this Discipline and Authority is to be exercised on all sorts of persons, members of the Church, whether they be pretended Teachers, as *Apostles* and *Prophets*, whether Men or Women; in a word, all who are capable to give offence and to be edified by Church censures, which young Children, mad men, and such like, are not in the reach of.

2. It concerneth all sorts of cases, whether of Error or practice; and is to be exercised in reference to the first, as well as to the last, as is clear from these Epistles.

3. These highest censures, are to proceed against Errors and Scandals of a high nature, as these mentioned in the Text are; or such as are agreed with hightening circumstances, as disobedience and contempt in not hearing the Church, &c. *Matthew 18.* and which after triall, are clearly made out: that thereby the sentence in its equity, may be convincing for the gaining of its end, both on the offending party and others.

4. It followeth here, that when offences are so circumstantiated in Church-members, censures are to proceed against them, and they are not to be suffered to enjoy Church-privileges, as if they were not under these offences, except they repent of them; yea, that un-Churching and Excommunication in such cases, is an Ordinance of Jesus Christ.

5. Church-officers may be often defective in reference to Discipline as well as to Doctrine, which is also a guiltiness before the Lord, as appeareth here.

6. Although a Church be defective in the purging out of corrupt members; yet that doth not pollute the Ordinances to others, or necessitate them to separate from them. These Churches continue to be Churches, and the Ordinances to be Ordinances of Christ, although such were continued in communion with them; and notwithstanding thereof, these who were free of those corruptions, are approved and commended by Jesus Christ. And if it were not so, that a persons endeavouring in his station to amend such a fault, and to have such scandals censured, did not exempt him from guiltiness, so as to continue in Church-communion, although the plurality of Officers should be short of their duty: in that respect then there might be still separation after separation, in *infinum*: which absurdity the learned *Hooker*, and *Norton* of new England, do press for the obtaining of submission to their Church censures and keeping of communion with their Churches; even upon supposition, that the plurality of a Congregation, should refuse to shut out some deserving the same. Otherwise (say they) when these did separate, upon such a new emergent occasion, there behoved to be a new separation, and so forth; because no Church or men can be expected to be so straight, as either not to keep in some unjustly, or not to suspect that some such are kept in: which also would be a snare to their consciences who judged so, and be a cause of separation, although it were not so indeed. And were this applyed to the defects of Presbyterian Churches, there would be no pressing necessity of separating from them, or from communion, in any ordinance, with them.

7. We may see from these Epistles, that although exact holiness be, *de jure*, required of all Church-members; yet, *de facto*, often, they are not all exactly such, and that therefore the holiness which is spoken of, as essential to visible Churches, or to Membership in them, is not rigidly to be extended to a reality therein. If this Church of *Laodicea* (wherein nothing is commended, but much found fault with) be considered, it will be found that this holiness will not abide a rigid trial;

yet it cannot be denied, but they have what is essential to a visible Church, and Membership therein; even as her Ministers, were Ministers, although not answerable to their stations, as was said: and if what these worthy men, *Mr. Cotton*, *Norton*, and *Hooker*, do assent unto in their writings, were accordingly adhered to in all practices, we conceive there needed not be any great controversie concerning this point. The second of these forecited Authors, *part. 1. pag. 20.* layeth down the pinch of the difference in these words (as he calls it.) *Whether such as walk in a way of prophaneess, or remain pertinaciously obstinate in some wickedness; though otherways professing and practising of the things of the Gospel, have any allowance from Christ, or, may be accounted fit matter according to the terms of the Gospel, to constitute a Church? Which Authors, also do acknowledge, that casting out of a Church, is but to proceed upon clear scandals of a gross nature, convincingly made out, and no otherways, part. 3. pag. 39.* And if there be defect in the executing thereof, separation upon that account, is disclaimed, as is formerly hinted, if the Church in Doctrine and administration of Ordinances be pure, that is, without error.

The judicious *Cobbet* of new England, hath an excellent saying (as he hath many to the Anabaptists) against whom he writeth (*p. 2. cap. 1. sect. 11.*) *Better (saith he) they who have not so peculiar a title thereto, be folded up in the Church, than that one of such lambs be left out in the wild wilderness.* And again, *cap. 3. sect. 3.* is full, to shew that there was no strictness observed in the admission of Professors to Baptism: but rather an enquiry of their purpose for the time to come, in bidding them bring forth fruits, and believe in Him that was to come, as from *John's* example, *Mat. 3.* and *Pauls*, *Act. 16.* where there is no mention of trying the faith of the households of *Lydia* and the *Taylor*: who yet were instantly baptized: as also were these Pharisees so checked by *John*, *Matth. 3.* and much more hath he well to this purpose. I have but hinted at these things, to shew that although there be many questions of Church-discipline; yet they are not all of one nature and hazard, with all adversaries. And the last doth rather concern the constituting of Churches, and admission of Members, supposed yet to be without, than the governing of Churches, and in-churched-members: in reference to which there is great difference.

8. We may see, that the sustaining of, and submitting unto this Church-power, is a necessary and concerning duty: and if, what is said of Church-power and Government be truth, then this submission must follow: otherwise there could be no Government nor exercise of Power, if those who are called by their stations to be governed, were not submissive thereto: and if it were the Church-officers duty to try and censure, even by cutting off such and such scandalous persons, Then it behoved to be their duty to submit, and the Churches to acknowledge these sentences, as Christ's Word is, *Matth. 18. Let him be to thee as a heathen, &c.* And *Heb. 13.* it is thus expressed, *obey them that rule over you, and submit to them:* which certainly, looks as well to the Authority of Discipline, that requireth submission, as to the obedience that ought to be given to the Word in Doctrine: for this cause, Officers are designed by the title *Rulers*: which is often given to civil Governours, and the fainting of such soul-overseers, is marked as a thing most unprofitable to the people themselves, and therefore is the more to be shunned.

Amongst other batteries against this Ordinance of Discipline, this is not the least that is raised against it, that it hath no compulsive force, if men willingly do not yield; which indeed tends to place all Authority in strength and force: for, by that same Argument, a strong son rebelling against his father; or a people or army against their Magistrate or General, should be exempted

exempted from their subjection to them; and the Parent, Magistrate or General, be denuded of their Authority over them: because they have not force to compel obedience. Authority lyes in Gods appointing of such to rule, and such others to obey; although some sinfully should invert that order, as such disputes teach men to do. And the Question here cometh, if in reason a Church-member may disclaim Church-authority and censures simply, or *de jure*, though by Power or violence they may do so *de facto*: yea, this doth indeed prove Church-government to be distinct from the civil: because it is not armed with worldly Power and strength, as other Governments of the world are; and in that respect, *is not of this world*, as the Lord Christ said of His Kingdom, *Job. 18.* yet was He still a King, and it cannot be but a high guilt to mar this, either by overturning of it altogether, or by encroaching on it, and thereby to mar its freedom or enervate its Power, or by refusing to submit unto, acknowledge, or authorize the sentences thereof, as mens places call them to do.

We may therefore propose a word or two to all, but especially to Magistrates in reference to this. 1. Let Magistrates in the fear of God consider what they do, lest they involve themselves in this guilt; it hath ever been hard to kick against the pricks: and although some would make encroachment on this Government to be a sweet thing; (which men easily admit in their own persons without any restraint,) yet the end thereof is bitterness. And it would be considered, if such counsels tend to commend Religion and further it, or not? which at the best are but to mould and restrain it, so as it may be subservient to their own greatness and ends, as in *Henry the 8. of England* did appear. 2. They would consider if conscience put them to it, or if the most zealous press it, or if some other thing drive it on, and to what sort of persons that design is most favourable? If it be not ordinarily the most profane, or other-ways erroneous? and shall Magistrates be subservient to such? 3. They would consider the absurdities and consequents alleged, if they be hindrances or ills to Religion and Godliness, or but to their own power and greatness, and that in pretext only? is it because they will more zealously or profitably do it themselves, or because they had rather it were not done at all, nor done by them, and such like? If it be the strengthening of their own Power, more than of Christs that moves them: for it hath often been a miserable mistake of the Powers of the earth, to seek the strengthening of their Government by their enervating of Christs, which hath proven to be the overturning of their own. If Magistrates cannot in conscience clear themselves in these things, it cannot but be found to be an encroachment on Christs Ordinances, which are useful and necessary in His Kingdom. 4. Consider the consequents, when things are marred and lye undone, or when misguided by un-discreet hands, who love nothing more than to make Ordinances despicable: for, if indeed a distinct Government be inconsistent with the civil, then a distinct incorporation as a Church is, must be inconsistent, even in its being, with a civil State and Commonwealth. And if Church-government be needless, because all things may be done by civil Rulers that are incumbent to it, a Ministry also will be needless, because civil men that have knowledge may supplie that: and seldome is any found that rejects the one, but he is (at least) exceedingly lax in the other.

5. Suppose it be obtained, that this Government be born down, what doth the Magistrates gain thereby? It is but, either that such things, that Church-discipline takes notice of, should altogether be slighted, that so there may be confusion in the Church: which is but a poor advantage: or, it is that the burden may be doubled on him, who had it heavy enough before, and so he be made more immediately liable for the defects that shall be in those things. And at the most, supposing

that they should be diligent in the outward duties for the restraining of the outward man; yet doth never that come up to the use of edifying, as it doth by Christs Ordinance of Discipline: for men, are but punished as men, and not as Christians; and faults are but censured, as in other States, and not as in Christs Church.

6. Let them consider, that the establishing of this Power, as distinct from theirs, doth not exclude them upon the matter from having access to any thing which may edifie the Church; for they are admitted to oversee the spreading of pure Doctrine and the restraining of false Doctrine, error and vice, and to every other thing conducing to the end of edification in the way suitable to their places; only it bounds them here, that pure Doctrine be Preached by Christs orderly called Ministers, and not by themselves or others, upon their meer command, and so that order be preserved, and Discipline and censures be exercised and made effectual in the Church in the same method. And this is not to restrain them in Government and incapacitate them for edifying the Church in their places, more than by refusing them power to Preach authoritatively, and to administer the Sacraments as Christs Ambassadors; or, more than a Father is incapacitated to exercise his fatherly power on an unruly child, because a Magistrate or Church-Judicatory doth concur with him.

7. They are no way weakened in civil things: for, what ever the Magistrate formerly possessed before the constituting of the Church, or what ever Magistrates in other States, where no Churches are, do possess, that is still allowed to him, where this distinct Government is erected: therefore it cannot be said, that it doth encroach on him: for what cases do flow from a state, as a state, are still left untouched by this authority: only what cases flow from it as a Church, or from the Members thereof, considered as Christians, these only are meddled with by it, to wit; trial of Gifts, admission of Ministers, censuring of Church-officers and Members, and that with Church censures, others than have been, or are used in any meer State or Commonwealth, and such like, &c. And seeing none of these belonged to the magistrate formerly, and do but flow from this consideration of their being a Church: It follows that the keeping of Power distinct in these, can no way be said to encroach on the magistrates Power, seeing he possesseth still, what ever any magistrate possessed: yea, seeing by the Church there is a new relation arising from what formerly was, it seems convenient and necessary, that there should be a new distinct way of ordering and governing the same: else supposing that a magistrate had under him both Christians and Heathens in the same incorporation, he were either not to censure Christians otherways for their faults than heathens: which is absurd; seeing the fault of a Christian hath a distinct notion from the same fault in a Heathen, to wit; it is an offence and scandal which ariseth from this, that the person committing it, is a Church-member; and so by their miscarriages, they reflect more on their head, and the profession of the Gospel, than the faults of others: or, he must punish the same faults that are done by persons under the same civil Law with several and distinct punishments, which is no less inconsistent with the nature of a civil State considered in its self, which admits not of distinct censures of the same faults and persons, more than of a distinct Power. And so if the consideration of a new Church-relation will admit of distinct Laws and censures, without wronging of the nature of a State, and that equity which ought to be kept in reference to Subjects; neither ought this of a distinct Power to make these Laws, and execute these censures, be thought inconsistent with Magistracie, seeing it flows from the same new relation; and this equity among Subjects, is no less essential to a well ordered Commonwealth, than universal Supremacie and Power



to the Magistrate. And the convening of Church-officers for the exercising of Discipline, and that without dependence on the Magistrate, can be no more inconsistent with subjection to him in civil things, than the convening of Church-members for hearing of the Word and receiving of the Sacraments, even though it should be expressly contrary to His command.

8. It would be considered, that the right exercise of Church-power, doth not only not weaken; but on the contrary, doth exceedingly strengthen civil Authority and obedience thereunto in the Church. For, where this is, a Magistrate hath all Authority that civil Laws give him, and all the power that the Word upon consciences doth imprint; and he hath beside these Church-power and censures concurring for his strengthening: because disobedience to him, is accounted a scandale by the Church; and therefore is amongst other scandales to be taken notice of, and censured by this Power; even as they take notice of disobedient Children, servants, and wives, which doth exceedingly strengthen the authority of these relations in the Church, beyond that which can be elsewhere. And thus the Churches Power doth confirm the power of the State, when they censure disobedience to them, and when they censure the same faults in the same persons, which the State doth, though under a different notion: and by so doing, they pronounce the Power and proceeding of the civil State to be just, when the things punished by it, are thus represented to them, and not only as faults against humane Laws and inconsistent with Civil-states, but also as sins against Christ and unbecoming His Church: which certainly cannot but add a great Impression of reverence unto the civil Power. Thus these two distinct Governments, do no way interfer, but support each other. And so as it's no obstruction, but a great furtherance unto Church-power in the exercise thereof (although it be still distinct and independent as such) to have Civil-power after its own manner concurring with it; so is it a strengthening to Civil-power, to have the accession of Church-power in its kind, to concur with it. And if indeed we suppose Magistrates to punish all things that are scandalous in the Church, there can be no prejudice to the Power by this, which doth censure the same things on another account. And if we suppose them not to do so, Then there is necessity for this Church-power, that such things may be taken notice of, as hath been said.

9. The exercise of this distinct Church-power, is a great advantage to the Church; and so cannot but be well consistent with Magistracy: for these two ordinances, cannot but be consistent. 1. It maketh sin hatefull. 2. It strengtheneth the Authority of all other Ordinances. 3. There can be no such way for trying qualified men fit to mannage Church-censures and Church-affairs, as such who are purposely chosen. 4. It hath what the Magistrate can give, and this beside. 5. It proveth more convincing and edifying to the person censured: for, (what ever is said to the contrary) experience doth prove, that no censure hath such convincing weight on consciences, as when it's distinctly administred by Church-officers. 6. It doth more shew the Holiness of the Head Christ, and the completeness of His Ordinances, and other advantages that may be gathered from what we said at the entry to this digression. In a word, if civil powers mind edification in their place, and to be a terrour to evil doers, this proves strengthening to them: because it furthers that end. If they mind not that, it is no marvell such a power be suspicious like, which tendeth only to the carrying on thereof.

It is ordinary to men to suspect more the encroaching of Church-men in Power and their exorbitancy than of any other, that being ever thought by naturall men to be a bondage, and these ever esteemed to be more proud, rigid, &c. and I know not what in the exercise of their Power. But men would soberly consider, 1. If that be the fault of the Ordinance, or of the

persons, and if Discipline well discharged and Ecclesiastically followed with love, meeknesse, conviction, &c. if so it were not usefull? And if the fault be in the persons, why should it be imputed to the Power it self in this case, more than in other cases? 2. Is there any thing in a Church-office to occasion this exorbitancy and miscarriage, more than in another civil Station? This looketh not like in it self. 3. If more neerly we consider Church-officers, there is no such reason to suspect them: for, is there any rank of persons so regulated, and to be tried in their qualifications for the exercise of their Trust, as by the Scripture they are? Or, are any places more deliberately filled, that men conscientious and fit for such a Trust may be called thereto? And are there any sort of persons so bounded with profitable rules in the exercise of their Authority? If there be defect in the observing of these, it ought tenderly to be remedied; yet, it cannot be thought but Church-officers must be most fit to mannage Church-matters. 4. Let them that are employed in Church-power be considered, without respect to that, are they not of themselves men of tendernesse, conscience, and gifts proportionably, as men in any other Station are, so that it may be supposed for their qualifications and carriage, they might have been men of other Stations; and if called thereto, Judges, Rulers, &c. without any just ground of suspicion more than others? And if so, shall the very Office, which ought to capacitate them more, only render them obnoxious to suspicion? This had need to be adverted unto, least their office be reproached. And may not that Power put in civil hands, be as ready to miscarry as in theirs? 5. What Church-men are usually most mistaken? Is it not they who still have been most faithfull and zealous in their duty? Have not men ever also been thought most intolerable even in respect of their freedom in the Word, as we may see in the case of *Elia*, *John the Baptist*, &c. and the two Prophets, *chap. 17*. Shall therefore Doctrine and Power in the Word, be thought insufferable? Or, shall the false Prophets of *Baal*, or of Antichrist, be thought more fit to have place than the Lords faithfull servants? This would be good ground that doth reflect only upon these that are so, and not others being ready to apply themselves to the pleasing of men both in Word and Discipline. 6. It would be considered, what may move men of judgement and parts (especially if they be conscientious) to top with Magistrates? It's not like that self interests doth that; seeing flatterers that seek that most, take the contrary way and come speed, when as the most faithfull are often under a cloud. Or, is it like that the most zealous, humble and tender, should be most subject to miscarry? And if there be ground to reprove or censure either by Word or Discipline, is it not most profitable, even though most displeasing, that it be done? 7. Consider, who most readily fret at this Power? It will be found they are such, who from inclination to loosenesse or error cannot abide any bands, or from a principle of politick indifferency in the matters of Religion, would mould all in a State-frame; and such are imbittered at freedom in Preaching, as well as Power in Governing; or, they are such as are fed with a prejudice at the power of Ordinances, which certainly men naturally are not free of: and it would be adverted in this. 8. Consider, that this mistake of Church-mens Power, doth often arise in such cases, wherein they are serving Christ: and men entertain it most in such times, when their frame is least spirituall and sober, as the observation thereof in experience will evidence. What man at the approach of death hath been comforted in such an opposition, or challenged for submission? Although contempt thereof hath lien heavy on many, and that to scare others from following their wayes. All therefore of all ranks, would be objected to advert to this, lest they be found even fighters against God: especially at such times, when this designe by some is driven; least by putting to their hand to pull down this Authority, they themselves perish in the

the fall thereof. And what doth the advantage at most amount unto? It is this, there shall be greater freedom to sin, and fewer means to reclaim from it; or what censure shall be inflicted, may be done in such a way as may stand with mens laughing at their sin, without being affected in the conscience by any convincing mean? Hath this ever profited any hitherto? Or, hath the right exercise of Discipline ever been prejudicial to any? And do not ordinarily Religion and Discipline flourish together? And are not Congregations in best case, where this Ordinance is most vigorous? And do not the sad effects of the want of this in other places evidently demonstrate the necessity thereof? People would consider these

things, especially these who are engaged singularly for the supporting of this Ordinance: for, a time of reckoning will come, when this exercise of Discipline and submission thereto according to mens places and engagements, will not be found so indifferent as now it is esteemed by many. And disputes of this kind, we suppose, will not be admitted, when the Lord will declare that he hath ratified in Heaven, what according to His will hath been pronounced in this ordinance of Discipline upon earth: which by Divines, is well accounted to be the ratification and confirmation of the threatnings contained in His Word, and added to make them the more weightie, as the Sacraments are unto the promises of His Grace.

## 2. Concerning a Ministers relation to a particular Congregation.

THIS relation between the Angels and the Churches, is mentioned in all these Epistles. The Minister, or Angel, is called the Minister of such a Church peculiarly: here the Church, or Candlestick, is called *His*, I will remove *thy* Candlestick. It will not therefore be impertinent to enquire a little concerning this mutual tie and relation in these three, 1. In the general. 2. In the grounds of this peculiar tie. 3. In the nature of it; particularly, in these two, 1. If a Minister, as such, be only a Minister to a particular Congregation, in which he serves: And, 2. If that tie be such, as upon no consideration it may be broken or loosed, and he removed by transportation to some other charge. We are the rather to take notice of this: not only because it serves to clear the Text in hand; but also because it supplieth somewhat yet defective in reference to a Ministers Call, (of which we have formerly spoken) to wit, what may be thought a Call, that is, by transporting of a man that is already fixed in a particular Congregation; or, if a Minister settled in some particular charge, may upon occasion act Ministerially in things peculiar to a Minister without the same.

For clearing of the first, we would distinguish a threefold relation that a Minister of the Gospel stands into. The first is, a relation that is between Christ the Master and Lord, and him as his Servant and Ambassador. This is the first relation, and fountain of all the rest: in this respect, they are the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the mysteries of God, 1 *Corinth.* 4. 1. and Ambassadors for Christ, 2 *Corinth.* 5. 20. &c. because they have their Authority and Commission from Him, and He peculiarly is their Master and owner. In this respect also we may consider the Church; and so she is Christs Church, purchased with His own blood, *Acts* 20. 28. This is the principal relation, by which both Angels and Churches are Christs, as He is the Sovereign Master and owner of both: And so neither are the Churches the Ministers, nor the Ministers the Churches; but both are Christs.

2. There is a lesse principal relation, which is delegatory, and flows from the former, He, to whom both Ministers and Churches do belong, thinking good to bestow Ministers as a Gift unto His Church: in this respect, Ministers relation is primarily unto the Catholick Church, and so, 1 *Corinth.* 12. 28. It is said, *God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers, &c.* And again, *Ephes.* 4. 11, 12. *He gave some Apostles, some Pastors, some Teachers, for the edifying of the body of Christ.* Here we may see that Ministers belong to the Church universal, and have relation to it, they being Ministers of that same Church, that the Apostles were Apostles of, and for that same end, to wit, the building of Christs body, which takes in both *Jew* and *Gentile*, as from that, 1 *Corinth.* 12. *vers.* 13. &c. doth appear. In this respect the Ministers principal relation and charge, is Christs Church universal, and His body: and they are given thereto, to wit, to the House of God,

which is the Church of the living God, into the which they are to behave themselves as Stewards, &c. as *Paul* hath it, 1 *Timothie* 3. 15.

3. We may consider this relation, as more particular, and less principal and as subservient to the former end: and so Ministers, are Ministers to particular Churches, and not to others; and Churches, are the Churches of such Ministers, and not of others, as we may see in these Epistles. These relations are neither inconsistent, nor yet to be confounded: and may, from the comparisons used in Scripture, be thus illustrated. The Church is compared to a City, or Vineyard, or Flock; the Ministers are Watchmen, Dressers, or Pastors: The Lord CHRIST is the Sovereign, and Owner of all. Now, if the question be moved concerning these Watchmen, Dressers, or Pastors, to whom they belong? First of all, they are Christs, as appointed by Him for such a Work, and countable to Him in it, as Watchmen are the Watchmen of such a State, or King, whom they serve. Secondly, They are also Watchmen of the City, in common, as that is the object of their watching, committed to them; or, they are Dressers of the Vineyard, &c. and so it may be said, they are Watchmen to the whole City. Yet, thirdly, Because there are several Towers of that one City, and it requires several Watchmen, and these require an orderly appointment of them to their several posts; and so in this respect, a Watchman that is a Watchman of the whole City, may be called peculiarly the Watchman of such and such a particular Tower, and Fort, for distinguishing him from other Watchmen of the same City; who, in that respect, cannot be called Watchmen of any particular Tower, but such as is allotted to them, although they be Watchmen of the whole City principally; and so may be said of the other similitudes. Even so it is with Ministers, who are primarily Christs, and by Him are delegates principally to the oversight of His whole Catholick Church; yet so, as for the better attaining of that end, each hath his particular Post assigned him; from which, for distinctions sake, he is denominated, as specially belonging to it. The former relation is essential to a Minister of Christ, to wit, that he belongs to Christs Church, and is commissioned for the edifying thereof. The last, to wit, a Ministers relation to this, or that particular Church, is not essential to a Minister of Christ; but is to be subservient to the former: for, we see Apostles and Evangelists had no such particular relation: and it is not impossible but a Minister may be separated from such a relation; yet is he still to continue a Minister of Christ: much less is the difference between one particular Church and another, to be counted essential to a Ministerial relation. Thus, in a great house, there may be many Stewards for distributing to the Children or Servants: and for order, each may have his number assigned to him for whom he is to provide, and on whom he is to wait. They are all, 1. Stewards of that one Master. And, 2. In reference to his own



house, they are all also Stewards of it. Yet, 3. By peculiar delegation, they are only Stewards according to their peculiar assignments. It's essential by their commission to be Stewards of that house; but not that they should be Stewards of such and such a number: for, this addeth no new power to them; but orders them in the exercise of the former.

In the second place; this particular relation between the Minister and a particular Flock, doth arise from these grounds, 1. From the Lords special assigning of one particular Church, to one man rather than to another: in which he is to labour for the good of the whole. In which respect, as he is a Minister of Christ, to the Catholick Church, and hath that common with all other Ministers; so hath he this peculiar to him, that he is specially designed in reference to that portion, as it were his particular Post, as hath been said. 2. Upon this delegation by the Master, such a people become peculiarly his; and by the Masters appointment, are to submit to the Ordinances administrated by Him: because, that same Lord and Master of the Minister, who warrands him peculiarly to treat with such a people, being also Master of that Flock, calleth them peculiarly to submit to him: from which, according to his appointment, there doth arise a mutual obligation between such a Minister and such a People: he is, obliged to minister unto them in the Gospel; and they, are obliged to submit to him, strengthen him, acknowledge him, communicate to him in all good things, and to provide for him, &c. And this mutual relation, is not founded merely on voluntary consent, nor is of a personal nature (to speak so) that is, as if he, or they were disposing of themselves as principal parties; but it is an obligation flowing from the former delegation, and cannot but follow from the nature thereof, and by vertue of the general commands given, *Heb. 13. 17. 1 Thess. 5. 12. Gal. 6. 6. &c.* although there were no explicate covenanting in reference to these ends amongst these parties: and where any is, it is but a formal expressing of that which otherwise is implied: and is necessary, not for binding up that relation simply; but for the better furthering the ends thereof. Therefore in that tie, Ministers and People both, are to look upon that obligation as a mean subservient to an end, and so to be regulated by it: and (as was hinted at) both would remember that they do principally belong to Christ; and that therefore it is not free to them to article or not, or as they will in that obligation, or otherways than may stand with the Masters end, and delegation foresaid. 3. From this mutual obligation, there doth arise a more near mutual sympathie between that Minister and Church, than between him and any other Church, or them, and any other Minister: they have common interests, common hazards, common joy and grief, &c. In which respect a cross to one of them, is a cross to both, as this threatening here doth clear: and in this respect, there is a greater sibneth between them than others not in this peculiar relation. 4. As there are peculiar duties called for on both sides from each to other, which are not so required between them and others; so there is a particular charge or reckoning and account, which will follow thereupon: in this respect, a Minister is to count more peculiarly for that particular Church than others; and the people again for the reverencing and encouraging of him in a special manner, as may be gathered from, *Heb. 13. vers. 17.* And upon this account, Paul did particularly aggrieve the Gentiles slighting and grieving of him, in his Epistle to the *Corinthians* and *Galatians*, because of his particular delegation in reference to them. In which respect although he was an Apostle of the universal Church; yet peculiarly was he the Apostle of the Gentiles: and upon that ground, did plead a peculiar claim to them; but still as subordinate and subservient to the former.

The third thing proposed, is, that which mainly is to be

enquired into, to wit, The nature of this tie and relation betwixt the Minister and a particular Church; If it be such as doth bound him in his Authority, so as he may not perform any Ministerial act without the same? and so upon the other side, if he be so tyed to that Church, that for the greater good of the universal Church, he may not be loosed from it, and be made use of, as a Minister, elsewhere?

For the first, We may take these general Conclusions for helping us in the understanding thereof. The first is, That there is an Union and Communion in the Catholick visible Church: which is one Body, *1 Cor. 12.* and that both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, one City, and House, one Commonwealth, *Ephes. 2. 19. &c.* one Mother of us all, *Gal. 7.* one Bride and Spouse, &c. Which expressions, do hold forth this Union in reference to all visible Churches, and all the members thereof. There are not two Bodies, Cities, or Commonwealths in this respect; yet must these places be understood of the visible Church, it being that Body, into which we are entred by Baptism, *1 Cor. 12. 13.* and that City, in which Watchmen are set, and external Ordinances: and that Commonwealth, which succeedeth to that which once was peculiar to *Israel*, and from which the *Gentiles* were once separated by a Partition-wall, which is now taken down by the Gospel.

Conclusion 2. Although this Church be one in it self; yet it is sub-divided in particular Churches, which are as parts of that whole. This ariseth from accidental considerations of the number of Professors, distance of place, and such like: in which respect, it's needful for her edification, and the going about of the Ordinances, that this should be; yet is this sub-division without prejudice of the Union foresaid, yea it is subservient thereto; even as supposing a numerous City or Incorporation should be sub-divided in so many Quarters, or lesser Societies, for the good of the whole. Thus the Church at first, being one, upon the former Considerations, upon this occasion did extend her self in this manner; and these who just now were of one Church, and meeting together for the Ordinances, were induced to divide in several Societies and meeting-places, (as may be gathered from the History of the *Acts*) yet continuing still of the same Body together, in the first respect. In which respect, sometimes the visible Church is spoken of in the plural number; sometimes again only in the singular, as pointing out an Unity: such are these phrases, to edifie the Church, to add to the Church, to cast out of the Church, &c. which respect the whole Church, considered as an integral whole, existing in particular Churches, as we say, *the whole world*, which doth yet but exist in so many particular Nations, and hath no existence distinct from them; and to say it were considered as a *genus* in this sense, would not be intelligible.

Conclusion 3. Our Lord Jesus, the owner both of Ministers and Church, hath given Ministers, principally for the edification of His Catholick Church, without respect to this or that particular Congregation, but as that is subservient to the former end, as it is, *Ephes. 4. 11, 12. 1 Cor. 12. 28.* it being one Church to which both Apostles, Pastors, Prophets, and Teachers are given; and they having all one scope, to wit, the perfecting of the Saints; and one Commission, to wit, the preaching of the Gospel, which principally is to engage Souls to the Bridegroom. Hence in their Preaching, we are to conceive this order, 1. Apostles and Ministers, &c. treat with sinners, to have them engaged by faith to Christ, as the Master for whom they treat. 2. To enter them in the Catholick visible Church by Baptism as the entring of them within Christs House in general, without respect to this or that particular Congregation: as when *Philip, Acts 8.* did first preach Christ to the Eunuch; and afterward did Baptize him, and then left him. And, 3. Being thus entred and brought in to the Catholick Church, thereupon followeth their entring into particular

particular Congregations, that so they may be the more conveniently and commodiously edified and provided for, as all that are in Christs Houfe should be: who therefore are committed to some special Overseers and Stewards for that end: as suppose the Eunuch had been admitted to some particular Church for partaking of the Ordinances therein after his Baptism; that he should be a member of Christs Church in general, which is sealed by Baptism, 1 Cor. 12. 13. was not indifferent to him, but of what particular Church he might be a member, that by after conveniency was to be regulated. Whence it doth appear, 1. That there is a consideration of the Church as universal, beside the considering of her in particular Churches. 2. That the Church so considered, as an integral whole, is before the particular Churches, and they are derived from her. 3. That the work of the Ministry doth relate principally to the whole; their Commission being, in common, to build the Body, to watch the City, feed the Flock, preach the Gospel, &c. and their delegation to particular Churches, is in a subserviency to this, that is, so as this may be the more orderly and conveniently followed: even as suppose so many Eldermen or Watchmen were by some Superiour designed for the governing and watching of one City, and should for the better accomplishing thereof, have their several Quarters and Divisions assigned to them; yet still were they to be accounted as Governours and Watchmen of the City principally, and not of these particular portions only.

*Conclusion 4.* Although they be designed principally for the Catholick Church, and their Commission will bear them to treat any where; yet are they not Catholick Officers of that Church, nor at their arbitrement to treat where they will; but (according to the order which he hath settled) in particular Churches as parts of that whole; that being the way which he hath laid down for edification. I say, 1. They are not Catholick Officers, there being great odds here betwixt *Officers of the Catholick Church*, and *Catholick Officers of the Catholick Church*, such the Apostles and Evangelists were; such the Pope claims to be, that is, to have an immediate access for exercising the Trust equally to all places. Officers of the Catholick Church, are such as are placed in it for the building up thereof, and have Commission in reference to that end; yet is it to be executed according to the rules laid down, that is, as Christs Call in an ordinary way shall give them access. For although (as was said) they have a Power and Commission, *actu primo*, to be Ministers of the whole Church, and Watchmen of the City indefinitely; yet, *actu secundo*, they are specially delegated for such and such Congregations or Posts, as was hinted in the former similitudes. In this respect, *Peter* and *Paul* were Apostles of the Catholick Church equally; yet, for the good thereof, by special appointment *Peter* becometh the Apostle of the Circumcision, and *Paul* of the Gentiles: and so *Paul* could not be called the Apostle of the Circumcision, nor *Peter* of the Gentiles, in an equal manner. Hence that Argument may be answered, If a Minister be a Minister to more Congregations beside his own, then he must either be a Minister to them as to his own equally, and so have common charge of all: which were indeed absurd, and would constitute him a Catholick Officer; or, he behoved to be to them a Minister or Officer of some other kind than to his own, which were also absurd, and would introduce a new kind of office and Officer. It's answered, *actu primo*, he is a Minister of the same kind to all the Churches, to wit, a Minister or Ambassadour of Christ; but, *actu secundo*, and in respect of special delegation, he is peculiarly Minister of that Congregation, whereto particularly he is appointed: in which respect, *Paul* and *Peter* are equally, and yet not equally Apostles of the same Catholick Church.

*Conclusion 5.* Notwithstanding of this particular delegation; yet is it profitable that a Minister should exerce Ministerial

acts, upon occasions warrantably calling for the same in other Churches; and when called to it, he may do it, not only by vertue of his gift; but also Authoritatively and by vertue of his Office and Commission, as a Minister of Jesus Christ: even by that same Authority and Warrant, whereby ordinarily he ministers within his own Congregation; and they are acts of Ministerial Authority in the one as well as in the other: for Ministers in the Church, are not to be looked upon as Majors of several Towns, or Sheriffs of several Counties, who cannot exerce Authority out of their own Bounds; but they are to be looked upon as Heralds of one King, having Authority to charge in His Name, where ever it be, within His Dominions, although for the better supply of the Subjects, some of them be designed for one corner, some of them for another of the kingdom: or, they are like Ambassadors, Authorized to treat with rebellious Subjects, who have each of them Authority to treat and conclude with whosoever shall come in their way: although for the better carrying on of that treaty, some of them be designed for such a corner, and to tryst at such a place, and others elsewhere; yet all of them being joyntly Ambassadors, and any of them warranted, if it were possible, to treat and conclude with all, by vertue of their Power: so that the ending of the Capitulation with one of them, is equally strong and binding as if it had been closed with another, although for elchewing of confusion they met in their treaty severally. It is so here, every Ambassadour of Christ, upon Gods occasional Call, hath warrant to propose the same terms, and conclude the treaty with a sinner; yea, to seal it in any Congregation, as well as in his own: which may be cleared and confirmed further in these following considerations.

1. The Power and Commission, which a Minister hath to perform Ministerial duties he hath it from Christ the Master and Lord of the whole Church: and in this respect, is the Minister of Christ, 1 Cor. 4. 1. and his Ambassadour, 2 Cor. 5. 20. and therefore may his power extend it self to His visible Kingdom, he being a Herald Authorized to proclaim in the name of that King: as far therefore, as his Authority as Master doth reach; so far may His Ministerial delegation under Him, upon just occasion, be extended. Indeed were his Authority derived from a particular Church, it could be extended no further than it self; (which is the ground of this mistake) but his authority being derived from Christ, the Master though in a mediate way; and the Minister being His Ambassadour, treating and performing all his acts in His Name, there is no ground to deny this Ministerial Authority of the servant, where the Master is acknowledged.

2. Consider, that the Masters intent in sending Ministers, is, by them not only to edifie particular Congregations, but the whole Body, as is said. A Minister therefore in his acting as a Minister upon such occasions, must be as a Minister in them: otherwise he were only given as a Minister to that particular Church.

3. If his relation to the Catholick Church be principal, and his relation to a particular Congregation subordinate to that, Then must his Ministerial Authority, in the case foresaid, extend it self to others of the visible Church, beside that particular Congregation: because, according to the rule, *propter quod unumquodque est tale, id ipsum est magis tale*, that is to say, if because he is a Minister of the Catholick Church, he is therefore capable to be a Minister of a particular Church; or if his Authority reacheth to that particular Church, because it is a part of the whole, then much more must he have a relation to the whole: But the former is true, as hath been cleared. Ministers are in capacity of taking the Oversight of such and such Congregations, because such Congregations, are parts of the whole Church; and Ministers are appointed to edifie the same; and do undertake that particular charge, as it is subservient to the general end of edifying the whole: even as



Watchmen take the oversight of such a Post, because they are Watchmen of the City; and their over-seeing such a place in particular, doth contribute to the good of the whole.

4. Their Commission, which they have from Christ, will suit as well in one Congregation, as in another, it being indefinite to Preach the Gospel without respect to this or that particular People; and it agreeth also with their office, and His end: seeing therefore their Commission, in the matter of it, is not bounded, What warrand is there to bound their Authority, as if as Ambassadors they did treat with one People, and as private persons with another; whereas their Commission, in it self, is indefinite, and by accidental considerations but appropriated some way to one people more than another? For further clearing whereof, consider,

1. That the Apostles had their bounds in Christian policy assigned to them; yet notwithstanding might they Authoritatively, as Apostles, act any where in the Church: therefore will not the particular allotting of Congregations for Ministers in a special manner, confine their Authority within the same. It's true, they were Apostles of the Catholick Church, and so might use Apostolick power in any part thereof, which a Minister cannot do; yet proportionally, he is a Minister of that same Church, as is said: and therefore as that peculiar delegation did not marr the Apostles in the use of their Apostolick power when it was called for any other where; (for, although they did it in an extraordinary way, yet Peter had still Apostolick power in reference to the Gentiles, and Paul to the Jews, when they exercised it;). So may a Minister have ministerial power, in ministerial acts, and may act by vertue thereof, when in an ordinary way he is called to it without the bounds of his own Congregation.

2. If Apostles might use Apostolick Power, and, as Apostles, act without the bounds of the Catholick Church, Then may Ministers act, as Ministers, without the bounds of their particular Churches: because there is a proportionableness in respect of the extent of power betwixt Ministers in their particular Congregations, and Apostles in the Catholick Church; But it's certain that the Apostles, as Apostles, did Preach to Heathens, and engage them to Christ, and enter them in the Church, and that by vertue of their Apostolick Commission and Authority: It will follow therefore, that a Minister is not so bounded by his relation to a particular Church, but that he may exercise ministerial power without the bounds thereof.

3. If a Minister, by that same Authority, may preach and administrate the Sacraments to others without the Congregation, as to these within, Then is not his ministerial Authority confined to one particular Congregation: But the former is true. For the matter of preaching, it is not denied: onely it is said that they preach not by ministerial Authority, but as gifted private men. Unto which we oppose, 1. If a Ministers warning, reproof, invitation, &c. have equal weight with it in every part of the Church, as it hath in his own Congregation, Then must he preach every where as a Minister; because, it cannot be denied, but he hath in his own Church a ministerial Authority, beside that which a gifted Brother would have; But the former is true, the Word by him hath the same weight as preached by Commission from, and in the Name of Christ, so that he may say, *we pray you in Christs stead be ye reconciled*, which another cannot do: and the guilt of refusing the Word from him, will be found upon the account of his Authority, no less inexcusable than if the refuser were a member of his own Congregation. And I suppose a conscience will not get a defence tabled for excuse upon this exception. Beside, the Minister hath ministerial Authority, as an Ambassadors, to conclude with them that receive his word; and by the power of the keyes, to pronounce pardon upon the terms of the Gospel

in one Church, as well as in another; and one may receive that word, and rest on it as spoken by an Ambassadors, and expect the ratifying thereof. And if it were not so, their consolation were exceedingly lessened, and the Minister disabled from concluding the treaty as an Ambassador, which doth not agree with Christs end of sending Ministers, which is the perfecting of the Salvos, and edifying the Body indefinitely, *Ephes. 4. 12*. And therefore may he, as an Ambassador, act in these ministerial duties.

The considering of the second Branch, will clear it more, to wit, thus, If a Minister may administrate the Sacraments without his own Congregation, Then must his ministerial power go beyond that relation: because there is a ministerial power requisite for these, which no gifted person whatsoever can assume; But the former is true. *Ergo, &c.*

This minor is denied by some, as being an unwarrantable practice; yet being generally used by all, it is thus answered, That a Minister may give the Sacrament of the Lords Supper to one not of his Congregation, because the body of the Church thinks good to admit them: and therefore he may warrantably administrate it to them, it being still lawfull to him in it self to consecrate the elements in his own Congregation. But we reply, 1. That a Minister may warrantably Baptize one, who is no member of his Congregation: and therefore neither of the former answers will weaken this Argument; As suppose a Minister did encounter some heathen, it cannot be denied, but he might Preach the Gospel to him; and upon his professed Faith and Conversion, baptize him: otherwayes it were now impossible to baptize and bring in a heathen; which were absurd. Yet could not that be done, without Authority, as is granted; nor could it be done to him as to a Member of a particular Church: because, even after his Baptism, it were lawfull for him to choose what particular Church he would joyn unto; neither before that, were he in capacity thereof, nor could the Minister act therein by the Churches warrand: because, 1. The Church could not judge a person that is without: that were not within their reach. 2. Because a Minister might do this upon occasion, where there could not be access to have any Church determination concerning the thing, as suppose it were abroad on a journey, as Philip's encounter was with the Eunuch, *Acts 8*. yet can it not be said that upon the heathens proposing this question, *what doth hinder me to be baptized?* that it might be answered warrantably by the Minister, it hindereth, because thou art no Church-member; or, my Church is not here to authorize me, &c. such answers would be uncomfortable to the man, and disproportionable to Christs end. It followeth therefore, that the Minister, as a Minister, might baptize him, and seal the treaty, and so Authoritatively treat and Preach as a Minister, seeing Authoritatively he may seal it. The former answer is therefore weak: And, 1. doth speak nothing at all to the case of Baptism; Nor, 2. to the administration of the Lords Supper out of his own Congregation, seeing it alloweth him power only to consecrate the elements there: yet there can be no question, but Authority to administrate the Lords Supper, must be as broad in this respect, as to administrate Baptism, seeing they are both seals of the same Covenant. 3. If a Ministers power were peremptorily commensurable with his flock, even in that case of the plurality of the Church their admitting of such a member, the Minister could not be warranted to administrate to him; because still notwithstanding that person continues to be no member of that particular Church, nor subject to other Ordinances of Discipline: and therefore, according to the former grounds, no such determination of a people could communicate Authority to a Minister by such an act, as to make him use ministerial power in reference to a person, not under his charge; if otherwayes he were not furnished therewith.

4. These principles seem to be repugnant, both to the commission, and practice generally of all the Ministers of the Gospel: For, 1. They have one commission for all places and persons where they shall be called: this maketh them to act as Ministers in one place, and not in another. 2. Their commission is to treat for Christ indifferently, and for the carrying on of His design, without respect to this or that particular charge, except in a subordinate manner, so that by their commission, they are constitute Christs Ambassadors, Ministers and Stewards simply for the preaching of the Gospel and edifying of His Body. This saith, they are but Ambassadors in reference to such and such a people: and so consequently, could not by His warrant, close a treaty in His Name with any other. 3. A Minister by his commission, is absolutely set a part for the Work of the Ministry, so long as Christ hath Work for him, if he continue faithful; yea, by virtue of this his commission, he is to follow the same. Now by this, suppose a particular Congregation to be dissolved or destroyed; or, suppose them to reject him that he hath no access to exercise his Ministry amongst them, in such a case he ceaseth to be a Minister, and his commission expieth, according to these principles, so that he stands afterward in no other relation to Christ than any private person so qualified.

It doth also thwart with their practices, it being acknowledged and practised almost by all ever since the dayes of the Apostles, that Ministers might and did administrate Word and Sacraments Authoritatively beyond the bounds of any particular Congregation. And although in the primitive times, there was strict interdiction, that no Bishop should exercise jurisdiction at his own hand, within the bounds of another; (which was necessary for preventing of confusion and keeping of order) yet was it never heard that a Minister might not Authoritatively Preach, and administrate the Sacrament by the key of order in any part, as he might be called: yea, it is not to be thought that the Ministers of particular Churches in their voyages to the Apostles, or scatterings and otherwayes, whereby they were necessarily withdrawn from their own particular charges, that they did, during that time, abstain all ministerial exercises, because so it should prejudge the Church of their labours as Ministers, during that time: which is not likely, considering, that their help in the ministry of the Gospel, is sometimes insinuated, and acknowledged by Paul; and they counted his fellow-labourers, such as *Aristarchus*, *Epaphras* and others, companions and fellows, both in Paul's sufferings and labours. It is like therefore, that their ministerial acting, cannot be confined to any particular place or Congregation.

Lastly, This opinion would infer many absurdities; As, 1. A Minister could administer no Ordinance as a Minister, and some not at all, but in his own Congregation. 2. Nor in it, but to such as were of his own Flock. And, 3. If any other were present, he should be the Ambassador of Christ to one, and not to another; and that in the same message. 4. Suppose a Congregation to want a Minister; or, that he be, by sickness or otherwayes, incapacitated from exercising of his Office, By this ground they could have no ministerial act administered amongst them, and so no Baptism, or Sacrament; nor yet have any benefit of a Ministry more than if there were no such Ordinance. 5. By this, no particular Church might have ministerial communion (to say so) in Church-ordinances together, but such as private persons; yea, as heathens might have in the hearing of the Word. 6. There could be no ministerial communion and help amongst Ministers: for so, no Minister could supply another, more than a private person, though Ministers, as joyned workers in one Work, be called in a special manner to have communion together. 7. No Member, how ever gracious, being withdrawn from his own Congregation, could be

under any ministerial charge, or have access to the preaching of the Word, as it is a treaty by an Ambassador; or, to any Sacrament for himself or his: which is hard, considering that it is the same Master, and the same house; and seeing often occasions may draw men abroad where the Ordinances are, this would make them in a great part to be strangers even within the Church whereof they are children. 8. No Minister might Authoritatively reprove any offending brother nor of his own Congregation, nor censure such as did not willingly joyn, howsoever scandalous: which is contrary to the practice of *Ephesus*, as already hath been said. Neither would this bring in confusion, or the making of the particular privileges of a Congregation common, more than is allowable: because this pleadeth not for an arbitrariness in the exercise of this power; but that there may be a power to be exercised for edification, when it shall be called for.

Neither will it hence follow, that a Minister, Elder, or Deacon, may thrust himself in, to the exercise of Jurisdiction in every place, because they are Officers of the Catholick Church: because, 1. This only saith, that he, being called orderly by an opened door may exercise his power in one place and Congregation, as well as in another. 2. Because ruling belongeth to the power of Jurisdiction; which, beside instalment in an Office, doth require other things to concur with it, before it can be exercised: Preaching and administration of the Sacraments, are done by the power of order, and by virtue of the Office as such. Hence a Minister might preach to Heathens without the Church, and Baptize in due order; because he doth that as a Minister: yet could he not censure one such, till he were a Church-member, and untill there were some orderly way of trying, judging, censuring, &c. by a Church Judicatory settled: because the exercise of this power doth require more than the being of an office. And therefore even the Apostles who did thus preach and administer the Sacraments; yet neither judged these that were without at all; nor these that were within (when they acted by ordinary rules) except in the way of orderly proceeding. Therefore, *Acts 15*. Paul found it meet to go to Jerusalem to a Synode for deciding of some things by this power of Jurisdiction, although still by his Doctrine he was Authoritatively condemning the Error: which sheweth, that there is more required in the one than in the other. And in that practice, the Apostles gave a precedent to Ministers whereby to be directed in ordinarie cases, because in it they did follow ordinary rules common with them to all Ministers, and did not act as extraordinary Apostles, for so one was equally sufficient for deciding of the matter as all were, but in this a copy is given how the Church is to walk in such cases ordinarily.

The last thing which we are to enquire into, is, *If this relation betwixt a Minister and a particular Congregation be such, as the Church for a greater good to the whole body may not loose it; and call one, serving at one particular Church, to fix and serve elsewhere, upon supposition that it may more further the good of the whole Church?*

Answer. What is already said; doth make way for the answering of this, which we shall comprehend in these three Assertions.

Assert. 1. No Minister ought to dispose of himself at his own private arbitrement, to the prejudice or dissolution of a tie betwixt him and a particular Congregation that is orderly and legally settled. For, first, no Minister being free of such a relation, ought to dispose of himself arbitrarily; (as was said in the close of the first Chapter) much more being under a tie and particular relation. 2. It's a general to all, *1 Cor. 7. Let every man abide in that calling wherein he is called*; but especially, Ministers are to walk by a singular call, even in reference to a particular Charge: so as it may be the Flock over which the



Holy Ghost hath set them : which must, at least, include his being set there in the mediate way of Church order ; which is that that the Holy Ghost owne, as by comparing, *Acts* 13. 3. and 4. and *Acts* 14. 23. with *Acts* 20. 28. is clear. This therefore cannot be left to any private way of transacting betwixt a Minister and a Peopl. 3. If it were so, then this particular relation were of no value, neither could properly a Minister be called the Minister of such a Church ; or such a Church be his in a more peculiar manner than other Churches, if he might at his pleasure and of himself dissolve that Union. 4. Ministers being servants of Christs House and Watchmen put to their Posts by Him, as being specially to count for that People committed to them, they ought not and cannot without His warrant remove : this would be found to be treachery and unfaithfulness in any other Servant or Watchman, much more must it be here. 5. Whereas Christ hath appointed these particular relations for the entertaining of order, the preventing of confusion and promoting of edification, This would destroy these ends and bring confusion into the Church : which is contrary to the order that He hath established in it. Lastly, It would beget despising of the Ministry in the hearts of the People, and lay them open to snares, if a Ministers settling in a place stood so upon his own Election ( especially after a former tye ) as is usually in men who are of other professions. And there are many strict acts of Councils in all times against this as a most wretched abuse, if it should be admitted in the Church.

*Affert.* 2. Although this tye cannot be loosed by any private consent, so that no Minister can transport himself upon that account ; yet may the Church for her own greater good transport a man from one particular place to another, and that warrantably, notwithstanding of the former particular tye and relation : yea, sometime it will be expedient for the good of the Church so to do. The application of the former grounds and the laying down of some others, will make way for the clearing and confirming of this. The first is, If there be an Union and Communion in the Catholick visible Church, and if Ministers be especially given to the edifying of it, and in a subordination thereto, to the edification of particular Churches, Then supposing that a Ministers transportation from one place to another may further more the good of the whole than where he is, in that case, it ought to be done. Because the whole is to be preferred to the part, the good of the Body to any particular member : and in that case, it is not the prejudice of that particular Church, that their Minister be set where he may more profite the Body, but ( as the Learned *Bowles* in his Treatise of a Gospel Ministry, *lib. 3. cap. 7.* saith ) " It's rather " there preservation and safety, even as it's the good of any particular Fort of a City, when " a Watchman is removed from it to some other Post, where he may be more usefull to the " whole City : because the benefit of the City, is the advantage of every person therein. But both the former are true, as hath been said, to wit, that there is an Union and Communion in the Catholick visible Church ; and that a Ministers relation, standeth principally to serve Christ in reference to the edification of the whole : Therefore, &c. 2. The examples used already, hold this forth, the Church being one City, and Ministers appointed to be Watchmen thereof, there can be no reason why one may not be removed from one corner to another, if so it may conduce for the good of the whole. This is allowed in all Commonwealths, Cities, and Incorporations, &c. and is engraven by nature on the hearts of all men to preserve themselves into Societies by such means : and can that be denied to the Church of Christ, which nature maketh common to all Incorporations ? 3. If a Ministers relation to a particular Charge be lesse principal and subordinate to his relation to the whole Body, Then ought it not to stand in the way of his being useful to the whole, But rather it is in such a case to cede and give place to the other :

otherwise that particular relation would be principal, and would not be subservient to the other, as a higher end : because so, the Church in general would be more frustrated and prejudged of the benefit of such a mans Ministry, than if there had been no such relation at all. But the former is true, This particular relation is subordinate to the other, as is said. Therefore, &c. These consequents do follow upon the grounds formerly laid down. Moreover we may add these uncontroversible conclusions.

*Concluse.* 1. There is a diversity in the cases of particular Congregations ; and there is diversity also in the gifts of Ministers. Some Congregations are more weighty, and much more of the good or hurt of the Church dependeth upon their plantation than others. Again, some are more intelligent, some are more uneasie and dangerous to deal withall, &c. as experience cleareth. Whereby it is apparent that the planting of some places, is of great consequence for the Gospels advancement, above the planting of others ; and also that comparatively, one place will require Ministers otherwise qualified than another. Again, there are diversities of gifts among Ministers, some are fit for one People, and not for another, as is clear from, *1 Cor.* 12. 14, 15. &c. *There are diversity of gifts, but the same spirit, differences of administrations, &c.*

*Concluse.* 2. Ministers ought so to be distributed and placed in particular Charges, as that there may be some proportionableness and suitableness betwixt the Minister and his Charge, that is, the ablest Minister should have the weightiest Charge ; the weakest, the easiest burthen : and as their gift is more eminent in learning, teaching, prudence in Government, &c. there likewise ought a proportion to be kept in laying on their Charge, so as there may be a fit object for such qualifications, and as the good of the Bodie may be most advanced. This also we take for granted : for, that is the end of all gifts which are given to every man *that he may profite withall 1 Cor.* 12. 7. whether it be the word of knowledge, or, the word of wisdom, &c. they are all members of one body, *vers.* 12. and therefore are to concur for the good of the Body, according to their several qualifications, as different members of that one Bodie : and in this respect, a disproportionating of a Ministers Charge to his gift, it is as if we would put the foot to do the hands work, or the ear to supply the room of the eye : which were absurd ; and would argue either such and such distinction and difference not to be necessary, and so all the members might be eye or head, or any one member ; or, it will say, that we are not to walk according to that which the Lord hath distributed to every one : both which are absurd, and expressly contrary to that which is said, *1 Cor.* 12. Where expressly these three are held forth, 1. That the Church is one Body. 2. That there are different gifts, which are as different members of one Body, some more eminently for one use, and some more eminently for another. 3. That the Lords intent by that difference, is, to have all these members concurring in their several places for the good of the whole Bodie : that so, as it is, *vers.* 25. by each members concurring in its own place, there may be no Schism in the Bodie : which cannot be eschewed, if this proportionating of publick Charges and Gifts be not observed.

*Concluse.* 3. There cannot be ordinarily such a discerning of the proportionableness of mens gifts to a particular station at the first entry, as to fit every one sufficiently, and to place them in their right room. This we suppose, is also clear from experience, wherein it is seen that many, at first, are fixt in Congregations wherein afterward there proveth to be a disproportionableness. And it cannot be otherwise, upon these considerations, 1. Because it cannot then be known fully what will prove to be the peculiar gift of every man, till trial and experience evidence the same. 2. Because this proportionableness is not only to be tried by comparing a man and a particular Congregation

gation simply; but it is to be taken by trying him comparatively, and that both in reference to other gifts and other Congregations: for, a man absolutely considered, may be fit for such a Congregation; yet when other Congregations and gifts are considered, it may possibly be seen that he is more fit for an other Congregation than many other Ministers; and yet possibly some of these may be as fit for his Congregation. In that case, it cannot be denied, but it looketh liker the right proportionating of every member, that men be put to serve in these Congregations, for which according to their gifts they are best fitted.

3. Because at a Ministers first entry there is not occasion to try a mans proportionableness to any other Charge but one, or at most in reference to so many as shall at that present be vacant and give him a Call. Now, suppose some other Charge should thereafter vake, it's hard to say that they should be simply excluded from having any access to that person, if his gifts were more proportionable to them: Because, as we said, this proportionableness is to be looked to in reference to what is most fit for the whole Body: for although (if we may so compare it) it is not unfit that the foot should be guided by sight; yet with respect to the whole Body, it is more fit for the whole Body, that the eye should be placed in the head, than in the foot: because it is not to give light to one member only, but to the whole Body. So is it here, a Minister may suit a particular Congregation, giving light as it were to the foot, whereas if we consider his office, which is to be an eye to the whole Body, he is disproportionably placed: for so the Body is darker, when the foot hath more light: which is absurd.

*Conclus.* 4. Christ hath furnished His Church with Power in her Judicatories and Officers, to proportion Ministers Gifts suitably to the good of the Body. Hence is the trial of Spirits and Gifts appointed: and in that respect, *the spirits of the Prophets, are to be subject to the Prophets*, 1 Cor. 14. otherwayes the Church in her Government were defective in that order which is in other Societies: and it would not be adequate and proportionate to its end, if that were not: for so there might be an inconveniencie and disproportionableness in the Church, and no remedy to cure the same. From which grounds put together, we may thus argue, 1. If God hath given diversitie of Gifts to Ministers, and they be to be improven for the good of the whole Body, Then supposing that a Minister settled in some more private or lesser Congregation be more proportionably qualified to fill such a place as is more large and eminent, than any other who can be had without a charge. Then in this case he is to be transported: because otherwayes, that being denied and the Charge put upon a man of no competent ability, there would be a disproportionableness between the Gift and the Charge. For that would joyn the able man and the light burden, and the weak man and the heavie burden: which were absurd; But the first is clear from the former conclusions. Therefore, *etc.* 2. If by a Ministers first plantation in a particular Charge there be a disproportionableness in the Body, which transporting of him to another Charge would remedie, Then is he to be transported: and transportation in that case must be allowable and expedient: because by it that due proportionableness is preserved among Ministers, and Members of the Body, which otherwayes would be defective, and so a Schism is prevented: For if the end, to wit, that proportionableness be necessary, Then transportation, which is a necessary mean whereby it is attained, cannot but be necessary also; But the first is true from the former grounds. *Ergo, &c.* 3. If transportation were unlawfull, Then we behoved to say, that either no Minister could be at first misplaced to the prejudice of the Body: or, that there were no remedie for such a case, for the recovering thereof; But both these are absurd, as the former grounds do clear.

4. If Ministers were peremptorily fixt by their first tie to particular Congregations, Then could not their Gift come under

cognition in reference to any other charge; which would inferre these absurdities, 1. That the Church were bounded and limited in the use-making of her own Members for her own good: which is contrary to the nature of a body; for so she might have Members, fit for such and such stations; and yet could not make use of them. 2. In proportionating Gifts for places, there would be little place for Christian prudence and deliberation: because so the case would be determined necessarily by providence, that such vacant places behoved to call such men as were not under any former tie, and they behoved to accept these particular charges; or, must both necessarily forbear; and so such Churches be without Ministers, it may be for a long time, before any did occur whom with confidence they might Call: and it will be hard to fasten any of these necessities upon the way of Christ. 3. By this, the Church should have little or no access to all to cognosce of mens Gifts, so as to proportion them for her good, if she had no place for it after their first entry to the Ministrie: because, then often there doth lye much of it upon the mans determining himself; or, at most a Presbyteries determining of him, and a particular Congregations pressing, who often are more swayed with respect to themselves, than to the Church in common. Beside, that there is no access to cognosce thereof upon other grounds given: If then the Church be any wayes allowed to cognosce or dispose of Members according to their Gifts, and that be not left to particular inclinations, transportation must be allowed. And if it be singly done, we suppose, there is no such access to cognosce of a mans Gift, and to proportionate it for the good of the body, as may be done in transportation. 5. We may argue thus, If Ministers be lights planted in the Church for the good of the whole, Then ought they so to be placed, as they may most extensively give light to the whole. Now, these are certain, 1. That there are some Congregations where a Minister may more conspicuously hold forth the light of the Gospel than in others, some places being as Tables or Candlesticks from which light doth shine; other places again, being as corners. 2. Sometimes a light may be set in a corner, or under a bushell comparatively, and not be set on the place where the greatest light is called for. 3. When it's misplaced, it ought to be removed from the corner to be set on the Candlestick: and although it may be, that that corner become more dark; yet the house in general becometh more lightsome. And if these former grounds be true, Then transportation, when it proves the removing of a light from under a bed, to the Candlestick, for the greater good of the whole house, must be allowed and admitted: But these two considerations will make this appear, 1. Christs expresse words, *Matth. 5. 14, 15. ye are the light of the world, &c. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushell, but on a candlestick, that all in the house may see light, (compared with Luke 8. 16.)* which demonstrates there, that Ministers are so to be placed as they may most lighten the whole house: and if any place conduce more for that than another, they are accordingly to be placed. 2. The Apostles practice clears this: we will find them in their Preaching especially, to frequent most populous places, because there was most occasion of spreading the Gospel in those: *Paul* is marked, *Acts 19. 10.* to have staid two full years in *Ephesus*, and that all *Asia*, upon that occasion, heard the Word: which doth hold forth, 1. That there are some places (particularly populous and publick places) of more concernment for the spreading of the Gospel, when they are well planted, than other places. And, 2. That the Apostles were in their abode and Preaching, exceedingly swayed by that consideration: so that although in some respect they had equal interest in all persons and Churches; yet did the consideration of the good of the whole engage them to have particular respect to some places beyond others; and so, as it were, to transport themselves from private places to more publick,



publick, that they might give light to the mee. 6. If the good of a particular Congregation, and necessity of a particular Minister, may warrant a transportation, much more may the publick good of the Church do the same: this cannot be denied; But both the first are true, 1. The good of a particular Congregation may warrant it, as suppose they be utterly prejudged against a present Minister, who yet elsewhere may have access to be profitable; either transportation must be allowed, or he must be rendred unprofitable, contrary to the end for which Christ hath given Gifts, 1 Cor. 12. and they put in a worse condition by having, than by wanting: For the second, That a Ministers particular necessity may constrain this, as suppose there be no possibility to live and follow the Ministrie in such a place, because of outward straits: thus, *Nehemiah*, 13. 10. the Levites by the withdrawing of their maintenance, are made to flee every one to his field; and *Nehemiah* contends with the Rulers, and removes that obstruction, and doth not challenge the Levites, as Mr. *Bowls* doth observe. We find also in Church-story (*Socrates*, lib. 7. chap. 36.) of one *Sylvanus*, who not being able to live in one place, because of his infirm health, which did disagree therewith, he was transported to another more wholesome and agreeable to his constitution. 7. If notwithstanding of that relation between a Minister and a people, any particular Member, or any other Officer, upon weighty consideration, may remove themselves, or be removed from that Congregation, Then may the Minister be removed also, upon supposition of the publick good: because there is that same tie between the people and the Minister, and other Officers and the people, that is between the Minister and them: for, the relation is mutual; But that private Members, and Elders or Deacons may remove, or be removed orderly, hath never been questioned. *Ergo*, &c. 8. If a Minister, upon particular occasion, for publick good, may perform Ministerial acts without his own Congregation for a time, Then supposing these grounds to be urgent, and Authority to interveen, why may he not be fully removed? for, the same ground that calleth to act for a time, to wit, the good of the body whereof he is a Minister, may call for it to be perpetual, and ought not to be rejected; But the first is true *Ergo*, &c. 9. If we will consider the Word of God more nearly, we will find this to be conform thereto.

And, 1. If we consider the Old Testament, it is certain that the Levites had their own fixednesse in the several Cities beside *Jerusalem*, seeing that was their Office to teach the People: and no question, it was done orderly: hence, *Thou and the Levite within thy gates*, is so frequently mentioned: and *Act. 15. 21.* it is said, that of old time *Moses* had them in every city that did preach him. It is certain also, that notwithstanding of that fixednesse, Levites might be removed to more publick service at *Jerusalem*, as is gathered from *Deut. 18. 6.* and 7. *If a Levite come from any of thy gates, out of all Israel, where he sojourned, and shall come with all his desire to the place which the Lord shall choose, then shall he minister*, &c. where a Levite's removing from Ministering in one place to another, is clearly approved. Neither is it to be thought, that this removal was left arbitrary to the Levite himself: because so, confusion could not have been eschewed; but when it is so qualified, that he cometh with all his desire, it doth suppose a trial thereof, and an orderly way of disposing of him, for the attaining of that end, to have proceeded as the learned *Junius* doth observe on the place.

2. If we come to the New Testament, there we will find our Lord *Jesus* himself going from City to City; he sendeth his Disciples to go through the Cities, Preaching the Gospel: the Apostles follow the same way in their practice: And we will find them sending Ministers sometime to one place, sometime to another; sometimes keeping particular Ministers with themselves, as from the beginning and close of several Epistles, may

be gathered. And although these practices may seem, at first, to be extraordinary, yet considering the end thereof, which is the spreading of the Gospel, and the ground upon which it is built, to wit, the unity of the Church, the good whereof is to be sought by all the Ministers who are Christs Servants, in reference thereunto; considering also that the Church, to the end of the world, is furnished with power for prosecuting of moral ends in an ordinary way; and that the Churches propagation, is the end now as then; seeing the removing of Ministers sometimes from one place to another, may conduce to that end now as then; and the ground, to wit, the good of the Church universal, is the same now as it was then, we conceive the practice it self must be moral, as the ground was, although then the manner and power was extraordinary, which is now to be performed in an ordinary way.

3. If we will particularly consider, *Act. 13. 1, 2, 3.* we will find this, near almost in an example. For, 1. There are there several Prophets and Teachers in the Church of *Antioch*, as *Barnabas*, *Lucius*, *Simon*, &c. 2. They are ministering there in a collegiat way, and that for a long time. 3. Two of them are pitched on, to be sent elsewhere, for the preaching of the Gospel; it being in the wisdom of God thought fit, to call some from *Antioch*, where were many, that others might be helped, who had nothing: although no question, there was work for all of them in *Antioch* it self: And He might have thrust out mee immediately Himself, if this way had not been pleasing to Him; yet their sundring was thought fitter for the Churches universal good. 4. This is execute in a mediate way by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, and with fasting and prayer: Whence we may argue, If for the greater good of the Church, some Teachers were taken from *Antioch* and sent elsewhere, Then may a minister, by Church-authority, for the end foresaid, be removed from one place to another; But the former is true. *Ergo*, &c. There is nothing can be objected against this, save to say that this was extraordinary, in that it was particularly commended of God: And, 2. That they were extraordinary Officers that were sent; But this will not enervate the Argument: for, in these practices of extraordinary Officers in the Primitive times, we must observe some rules to difference what is ordinary, from what is extraordinary in them, and so know what is to be imitated, and what not: otherwise we may reject all the practices of Christ, and the Apostles upon that account, and so prejudge our selves exceedingly of a great part of the Word that is written for our direction. Let us therefore observe these rules;

1. Where the ground and reason of a practice, is moral, although the Call thereto, and manner of discharging thereof be extraordinary; yet must the practice it self be moral, although the manner in so far as is extraordinary be temporary: Thus that the Kirk have Teachers (supposing that there must be a Church) it is moral; as also that her Teachers have a Call, This will follow from Christs sending of Apostles, Disciples, and others: Because the same reason saith, that a minister who is Christs Ambassador, according to his station (as an Apostle was in his) should have his commission as an Apostle had: but that the Church should alway have Apostles, or that her Teachers should be immediately called of God, that will not follow: because the reasons thereof are not moral. Now, if we may safely reason in the general, that a Church must have Officers with a lawful Call, because Christs Apostles had such, though it was immediate, and also he that was called ought to obey: by proportion we may gather, that a Church-officer may be called from one place to another upon a moral ground, although there be no immediate Call at his removal, more than at his first entry: because the ground whereupon this practice is founded, and which is the reason thereof, to wit, the greater good of the Church; is still binding now as then.

*Rule 2.* In these primitive practices, there is a proportionableness to be observed between the Officers who act, and their call and manner of proceeding, to wit, an extraordinary Officer, must have an extraordinary call, as such; and he may act extraordinarily in the prosecution thereof, by extraordinary Power, whereas an ordinary Officer must act, by any ordinary Call and Power, the same things, suppose in Preaching, Discipline, Ordaining of Ministers, &c. and in so far, that laying on of hands was extraordinary, as being done upon an immediate Call. But Ministers may follow it in an ordinary way, that is, by a mediate Call, they may ordain Ministers to a particular Congregation, or transport from one to another by proportion: because the Apostles by an immediate Call did send out extraordinary Officers to any particular place.

*Rule 3.* We would in such practices difference such things as are temporary, that is such as have special relation to that time and state of the Church (as extraordinary Officers and Gifts were) from such things as agree to the Church as a Church, and serve to the edification thereof at all times. And thus also transporting of a Minister, must be allowable in such case: because there can be no reason given why that practice should be peculiar or only agreeing to that time and case of the Church, or during the Apostles lifetime; but the grounds that infer the conveniency of it, are in a good measure common to us with them, to wit, the furtherance of the Churches good, which cannot otherways be so well done. And if it may be as well done without this, we acknowledge that this practice will not be binding. And certainly the Lords putting of the Church to this, to send out some already called, when immediately he might have thrust out others, doth say, that he minded to teach what ordinarily should be done by the Church in the like case: for his sending of them mediately by the Church, and not immediately by himself, as at other times, doth insinuate this.

*Rule 4.* We are to distinguish things wherein the Apostles acted extraordinarily, by reason of their infallible Gift, extraordinary Power, &c. from such things as were common to them with other Ministers, and wherein they acted in an ordinary way common to them with all Ministers: of the first sort were their immediate deciding of controversies, appointing of censures, sending of Ministers, &c. by virtue of their own alone power: this is not to be imitated: of the other sort are their admitting of Ministers upon a mediate Call to Congregations, as *Acts 14.* their debating and deciding of controversies, and making of Laws in a Synodical way, by reasoning from Scripture in an ordinary way, as *Acts 15.* these are imitable; and what they did in that manner may be followed: And their laying on of hands (when the Call was intimate) their praying and Fasting, which are mentioned in this place, were of the last kind; and so upon supposition of the intimation of a Call, this their practice for the substance is to be followed.

Now, to resume a little further the application, that we may know what is ordinary and what is extraordinary in this case; or, what is moral, and what perpetual, or what is temporary. 1. That there be a Call of God, that is moral and perpetual; and it may be concluded from this, That no Minister without Gods Call, is to be transported; but that that Call is immediately revealed by God Himself, is temporary, and not to be pleaded for in ordinary cases. 2. This is moral, that he who is called of God to edifie His Church, by leaving one place to serve Him in another, should obey the same. 3. It's moral, that this removal should not be at the mans own determination; but that it be done by Church Guides, and Church Judicatories. 4. It's a moral ground upon which this proceeds, to wit, the greater edification of the Church, whether by engaging and grafting in of Strangers, or building up of those that are brought in; this ground can no way be thought more pe-

culiar to these times than to after time: and therefore it is laid down as the great end of Pastors and Teachers, as well as of Apostles, as may be gathered from, *Ephes. 4. 11, 12, 13, 14.* 1. this reason then must have weight to the end of the world. 5. It's an ordinary way by which they proceed, to wit, fasting and prayer, shewing the necessity of a concurrence of Gods orderly and external Call with his inward, for warranting of this practice; and also shewing that when the removing of a Minister from one place to another may contribute to the good of the Body, they are in that heartily to concur who have most special interest. Now, these things being moral and of perpetual weight in the Church, although it will not plead that the Church may send out Apostles by an immediate Call, or that they may send out indefinitely without respect to any place, or not knowing where; yet this will follow, upon the grounds laid down, that when God calleth a man for the edifying of the body of His Church from one place to another, there it ought to be obeyed; and that sometimes God may call, for the greater good of his Church, to have men removed from one place to another. He is Master of the harvest: and therefore may either thrust out Labourers of new to His Field, or may take from one part of the Field to set upon an other. Only these things would be adverted here according to the former rules, 1. That by Gods call, is not to be understood any extraordinary thing, but His signifying of His mind in an ordinary way, that such a mans removal from such a place, to another, is upon consideration of his gifts, upon comparing of the places, and the respecting of the State of the Church, a hopeful mean through Gods blessing for the further promoting of edification. 2. As an immediate and extraordinary call was necessary for such officers in such a case; so proportionally is an ordinary call by ordinary Officers, acting by ordinary Power, only necessary for ordinary cases, seeing in moral things ordinary Officers, are to do by their ordinary Power what extraordinary Officers did by their extraordinary Power. And if we will consider this practice, we will find it this far to be intended for imitation: For, 1. Although the Lord immediately reveal the Call, yet doth he follow his design in an ordinary way: not by thrusting out new Officers, which he might have done, if he had walked altogether absolutely and extraordinarily in this; but he doth it in a mediate way of providence, in the making use of some already called. 2. The circumstances seem so to be recorded, as if the Lord were giving the reason of calling some from *Antioch*, rather than from any other Church, to wit, because there was a considerable number in that place of fit qualified men; and that so in reason it were more agreeable for the good of the body, that some should be taken from them to supply the want of the other, rather than that others should be altogether destitute, or some removed from such places as might not so well spare: and there can be no reason of the mentioning of this, but to show the moral equity of this practice, that Ministers would be proportionated in the Church so as may be extensively for the good of the whole: and that where some places abound, and others have scarcity; the abundance of the one, should condescend to supply the other, and that not of the weakest or least able. 3. The Lord useth a mediate way of sending them by the Churches interposing of her Authority and Prayers, which he did not use in the sending of Apostles, nay, *Matthias* had no imposition of hands; and this was because the election of the Apostles was no way to fall within the compass of ordinary Church-power, nor to be followed. It would seem therefore, that it is made use of in this practice, to signify that it is a thing to be continued in the Church, and to be performed by ordinary Church-judicatories, and imitated by them.

If we consider the times following, it hath ever been practised in the Church. It's marked to have been the practice of



the first two famous general Councils, as a mean useful exceedingly for the good of the Church. The *Nicen* Council did transfer *Eustachius* from *Berthea* to *Antioch*, *Sozom. lib. 7. cap.*

2. And it is observed particularly of *Gregorius Nazianzenus*, that he was thrice transported: first, he was Bishop in *Cappadocia*, thereafter brought to *Nazianzene*; and thereafter to *Constantinople* by the second famous general Council, and it's marked to have been of great use to the Church. *Cent. 4. 15. 300.* and to have been their common practice in this time. *Socrates lib. 7. cap. 35.* doth for this very end, give many instances of this in several persons. At the beginning of the Reformation, it was one of the great means that was made use of by God for propagating the Gospel in several places: the transporting or removing of Ministers from one place to another was exceeding useful: and what cruelty had it been to have refused the desire of the people, seeking Ministers from those that had them? and how else could they have been supplied? And proportionably the same weight lyeth herein all times.

*Affir.* 3. Although in some cases this be for the good of the Church, and is to practised by Church Judicatories; yet it is to be done with great singleness, tenderness, prudence and caution, least that which of itself, being rightly managed, is a benefit to the Church, be turned to an abuse, and prove hurtful to her.

These Cautions and Rules must be regulated according to particular circumstantiate cases, which cannot be numbred. Yet these things may be said, 1. That no self-respect ought to have place here, but the greater good of the Church and advantage of the Gospel, is the great *principion* whereby this is to be decided.

2. This general is to be found out, by comparing of places and qualifications with respect to the number of the hearers, their qualifications, as they are strong or infirm, tractable or stubborn, pure or corrupt; in respect of their stations, as they have influence on publick things or not, as they may have influence in communicating their light to other places; as the word in his mouth may be more readily and freely received without prejudice, and such other considerations of this kind:

some whereof, are hinted in the close of the former Chapter concerning a minister's Call at his first entry.

3. This comparison would not be considered between places, as if there were no tyf standing between him and either of them: certainly there is more disproportionableness required to loose one from a charge, than would have cast the ballance between places at his entry. Also other means of a proportionable settling and providing of such a place, would be first seriously essayed and followed if they occur.

4. This would be endeavoured to be done by convineing reasons, so as (if possibly) they who have interest may be satisfied, if not in respect of their affection, yet in respect of the reason, to wit, that it is the more publick good of the Church.

5. No people ought to oppose the removal of their most faithful and beloved ministers, when it's done upon convincing reasons. These people are content to yield to the removing even of *Paul* and *Barnabas*, who, no question, were most dear unto them. And certainly were there endeavours to convince on the one side, and an acquiescing to conviction on the other, it would look much more Christian-like, and prove much more useful.

And if this be a called for duty, to wit, that a Church-judicatory remove one from a settled congregation, upon such grounds, it must be a sin and an opposing of duty, wilfully to obstruct the same; and if it may be a call of God, there is more need of conscience and submission here, to try if it be so or not than absolutely to resolve a peremptory and pertinacious opposition to the same without any respect to the grounds thereof.

And we conceive that the keeping of a right mean in this practice, and eschewing of extreams, might conduce exceedingly to the advantage of the Church: and it would be exceedingly suitable to the unity of the Catholick Church and that communion that ought to be in her, and well becoming that Authority and care that is committed to Church-judicatories, that the several particular ministers were upon just grounds proportioned with respect to the edification of the whole. And so we have done with this particular relation.

### 3. Concerning the nature and difference of Saving and Common. G R A C E.

**I**N this Epistle, there is a large commendation of this Angel's practice: which is not only given to him in respect of the matter of his actions; but in respect of the qualifications of them: as, first, that he did not only suffer for, and have patience in, that which was materially right; but that he suffered for *Christ's Name sake*: and that he did not only hate the deeds of the *Nicolaitans*; but did it with a respect to Christ: which is here added, to difference the sincerity of these actions from others that are materially good also: for, no question, there may be much suffering, which is not commendable before Christ. And certainly many others, even among heathens, did hate these *Nicolaitans*, who yet cannot be thought to be alike comprehended under this commendation. This therefore that is added, for *my Names sake*, must be to show the sincerity and graciousness thereof, as that which did put a difference between their sufferings and patience, and the sufferings of others. And it doth imply, that this qualification, was that mainly, which made the Lord take notice thereof. It is therefore the same on the master with that, *Matth. 5. 11.* of being persecuted for *Christ's sake*, to which the promise is made, *verse 12.* and the same with that, *1 Pet. 4. 13.* of being made partakers of *Christ's sufferings*, and of being reproached for *his Name*; which being an evidence, and part of blessedness in these places, cannot be conceived but to imply sincerity; without which, suffering it self, even where the cause is good, would be of no

weight as to that end. We do therefore conceive these words undoubtedly to be added; to point out that wherein their sincerity consisted, and wherewith the Lord was especially well pleased; from which we may gather these Doctrines.

First, That there is a great difference between an action morally or materially good, and that which is gracious, and as such acceptable to God. It is only simply suffering and hatred, which the Lord commends here; but Suffering and Hatred so and so qualified. Hence we will find frequently in the Scripture, difference made between these, to do that, which is good upon the matter, and to do it with a perfect heart. In actions therefore, there are these three to be distinctly considered, 1. The act it self, as it is natural, suppose an act of hatred, love, grief, &c. 2. As the Act is moral, and is directed toward an object that is agreeable to the Law, that is, to love that which is good, and to hate that which is evil, and so forth: both which, in many respects, may be in hypocrites, who may do that which is materially good. 3. We are to consider an act as gracious, that is, when not only the thing for the matter is agreeable to the will of God, as suppose, one were acting, or suffering for a truth; but also when that is done in the manner that the Law requireth, and with a suitableness thereunto: and so one suffers not only for a truth, but as a Christian he carrieth himself in his suffering for the same: it is this last which makes the difference and which the Lord

Lord doth especially take notice of, and commend by this qualification, that it is done *for his Names sake*.

Secondly, We gather, that this difference, wherein the graciousness of the act doth consist, is not to be inquired for in any intense degree of the act itself, whether positive or comparative (at least onely) but it is to be inquired for in the nature and kind thereof, to wit, in respect of positive qualifications concurring therewith, and having influence thereon: For, this commendation, is not given upon the degree; but from the nature of these acts: it is not commendable hatred, because it is in such an intense degree positively: nor comparatively, because it hateth these errors more than it doth hate truth; but because in their hatred of these errors, they conform themselves to Christs hatred of them. And likewise by that commendation *for Christs Names sake*, is not holden forth any degree either of their labour, or patience simply, nor yet comparatively, that they laboured more, or did suffer more for that which is materially good, than they did for any other thing; or, because their patience was for degree more than their impatience; but, that there was a peculiar respect to the Lords Name both in their labour and patience.

If it be asked, *what this is, which beside the moral rectitude of the act, must concur for the making of it to be accounted gracious?*

It may be answered in these four: First, There is a different spiritual principle in the person acting, which must actually have influence upon the act; and from which the act, as gracious, proceedeth. This in Scripture is called the *Spirit*, *Inner-man*, *New-creature*, &c. and is different in its acting from the *Old-man* and *Flesh*; yea, and from the faculties of the soul, considered meerly as natural: for, if we consider an act, suppose of love, submission under sufferings, or such like; it is the natural act of the soul as formally elicited by it: but if we consider them as gracious acts, they do proceed from the Spirit influencing them (to say so) with a suitableness to it self, by the co-operation of the Grace of God. Secondly, There is a difference in respect of the end; there is a gracious and spiritual end proposed in performing of such a lawful thing: this is implied here in this, that they had the glory of the Name of Jesus before them in their suffering and patience, as seeking to pursue that, and not to gain credit to themselves. Thirdly, There concurrerth to qualify a gracious action, a spiritual motive inclining the spiritual principle to follow this end, which can never be separated from the former, and here is clear in the two instances that are in the Text; where, as respect to *Christs Name*, is the end, so, love to Christ, and zeal to His Glory moveth them, and swayeth them to pursue this end, by such means, as *Labouring*, *Patience*, *hating* of the *Nicolaitans*, &c. and thus to have patience for Christs Names sake, is out of respect to Christs Glory, to be swayed thereunto. Fourthly, There is a difference in respect of the formality of the act, when not onely the thing that is good is yeilded unto, upon a good motive; but as such, it's yeilded unto or acted, that is, when the object, as so considered, is acted upon: and so not onely is one swayed to patience in suffering from respect to Christs Name; but upon this formal consideration, they yeeld themselves to it, and do it as such. So that still there is a reduplication in the act, suitable to the end and motive proposed: and as the person in the act hath another principle to act by, another end proposed to himself, and another motive perswading him to it; so hath he a different upraking of the act or object in the act, not onely as considered in it self as good; but as considered in reference to such an end, and as such he acts on it. As for instance, it is laudable and commendable to give to one that is in misery, and more laudable to love one that is gracious, and to supply his wants; yet both these are not sufficient to make the act to be accounted gracious, even

though the love to them should be most intense, and the beneficence large; but there must be a concurrence of these four formerly mentioned, to wit, 1. An inward gracious principle acting: otherwise, one may be renewed, and carry love to another that is gracious; and yet if it proceed not from this principle, it is not to be accounted sincere gracious love. 2. There must be a spiritual single end in their loving of them, and giving to them, to wit, the honouring of Christ in them, and their good. 3. A spiritual motive, to wit, the considering of them not onely as in strait, or as lovely in themselves; but as gracious and beloved of Jesus Christ, whose command calls for love to them. And lastly, this is done to them as such, when the heart in its affection, closeth with them upon this account, that they are beloved of Christ, and, as being themselves called of God to that duty. Thus, *Matth. 10. To give to a Disciple*, is one thing; but to give to him *in the name of a Disciple*, is another, that is, to give him upon that account that he is such; or, as it is, *Mark 9. 41. Because they belong to Christ*: the former may be often in many natural men, and hath no such promise; this cannot be in any but a Believer, who onely may expect the promised reward. This *as*, is to be understood, as *1 Cor. 8. 7.* where some men not onely did eat that which was sacrificed; but *as* such a thing, and under that formal consideration, that is, with some conscience of the Idol, as the words before carry it; and this *as* maketh it quite another thing. So is it to be understood here, when we say the object is to be considered as such. And in this reduplication, we conceive, that a main peace of singleness and sincerity doth lye, when not onely we do what is commanded, or suffer for what is truth; but when we do it as a thing commanded, and suffer for it as for His Names sake: and in some respect, it may take in the two former last differences; and so if any shal make the number fewer, we shal not debate, providing that under any name these be taken in.

Hence, thirdly, We gather also, That what ever act is so qualified (as in the former is expressed) it is a sincere gracious act in whatsoever degree it be, so that it be an act of *Patience*, *Love*, *Hatred*, &c. proceeding from an inward renewed principle, tending to a spiritual end, swayed by a super natural motive; and upon that account acting, it cannot be but accounted an act of sincere *Patience*, *Love*, *Hatred*, &c. although as to the degree of it, it be but like the grain of Mustard seed. For although the acts themselves, even toward such objects, may be distinguished from gracious acts; yet they cannot be conceived to be so and so qualified in any degree, but *hoc ipso*, they must be conceived to be gracious; because in so far they are agreeable to the Law, and that not onely in the matter, but in the manner of them. And this agreeableness to the Law, being a proof that one is Sanctified, without which no such act could be performed, it may be also an evidence of Justification, although it be not considered as a condition thereof, which is accepted by the Covenant of Grace. And although these acts be imperfect in respect of degree; yet they cannot be denied to be sincere, or perfect, in respect of their kind. Every act of the new nature in whatsoever degree being like it self, and conform to the principle from which it proceedeth; even as on the contrary, the least motion of the old man is sinfull according to the root from which it flows: for, these two cannot be separated, which the Lord hath put together; a good tree must have good fruit, and cannot bring forth evil fruit, *Matth. 7. 17. 18, &c.* Now, acts in the least degree so qualified, as before is said, are in so far, at least, fruits of a good tree; yea, of a gracious principle within: and therefore they cannot but be such also. And if it were not thus, that this Angel had patience for *Christs Names sake*, it could be no ground of commendation for differencing his patience, from the patience of hypocrites, if it did not sufficiently prove his carriage to be sincere. And hence,



Fourthly, Ariseth also this, that no natural man or hypocrite, though coming the greatest length in the state of hypocrisy, can in the least degree perform an act so and so qualified, as is before said, more than they can act from a principle which they have not: for, if they might in any measure have patience for *Christ's Names sake*, in respect of the end, motive, and account upon which the heart yeeldeth to suffering, it could be no ground of a peculiar commendation to this Angel, which is yet contrary to the scope. And if the former be true, that every act so and so qualified, is a sincere act, this must necessarily then follow thereupon. And so more particularly we say, that no hypocrite can thus formally do any thing that is good, as, to give instances, 1. In the duty of love to God; an hypocrite cannot love God as God, and to suffer for Christ's Names sake, as is formerly expressed. Because, 1. That is given here as the evidence of this Angel's gracious practice, that it was so qualified; and the promises that are annexed to this of suffering for his Names sake (whereat formerly we hinted) do confirm it. 2. This being true of all natural men, that they are real haters of God; and it being true also, that natural men and hypocrites may go a great length in loving God, and in expressing the evidences thereof in some respect; It must either be said then, that they hate God in respect of the materiality of their actions, or in respect of the want of the qualifications formerly mentioned, that is, because they love not him, and what he loves as such, and upon such an account, now, it cannot be said that they love not God in the former respect; Nay, not only in respect of their being defective alannerly in the degree or intenseness of the act, as may be shewed afterward. It must be true therefore in the last respect. And so it will follow, that no man in nature can be said to love God, or perform any act in things materially good, according as it is formerly qualified. 3. This may be added, that if respect to good, could sway the natural man so as to make him act according to the former qualifications in any one act, then might he perform all other acts upon that same account also: for, *a quatenus ad omne, valet consequentia*. Now, if it be absurd to say, that one can be a hypocrite, and yet in all his performances and actions be so swayed (which is the clear evidence of a sincere Professor which needeth not to be ashamed, *Psal. 119. 6.*) Then it must also be absurd to say, that a hypocrite may perform any commended thing upon that account as such, and is formerly qualified. 4. The doing of acts so qualified, doth necessarily presuppose a gracious principle, or habitual change in the person that act it: for, it being a fruit, (in so far as it is so qualified) that is good, and agreeable to the Law of God in the spiritual meaning thereof, it must be supposed to proceed from a tree that is good, seeing grapes are not gathered from Brambles, &c. It cannot therefore be consistent with the state of hypocrisy, for one to perform acts so qualified, who in practice is still a stranger to the spiritual meaning of the Law in the kind of the act. 2. It may be instanced in hatred: for, though one in nature or an hypocrite may hate that which is sin; yet from this we may gather that he cannot hate it as sin, and as it is hateful to God: Because, 1. This hating of the *Nicholaitans* deeds, is given here as a proof of this Angels sincerity: and if it were a thing common, there could be no such peculiarness in it: and there can be no peculiarness here, but that they hated them upon that account as hateful to God, and out of zeal to him they did it: otherwise, no question, heathens and natural men might have hated at them in greater vehemency for the degree thereof, than these who are commended. The difference then must be in the qualifications, as is said. 2. The reasons for the former instance will confirm this also: for, if one might hate sin as sin, and as hateful to God, then might he hate all sin, and what is hateful to God, according to the axiome formerly laid down, *a quatenus ad omne*, &c. and so he

might hate his loving of any thing more than God, and his being defective in the degree and manner of any duty: and consequently, he could not be said to love any thing more than God, seeing no man can actually love a thing, and, upon that same account and consideration, hate that act of their love, at the same very time, in the same very degree: It must then follow, that what hatred they bear to sin, is for some other ends, and not upon this account. Again, if one might hate sin as sin, one might love grace as grace, it being equally approveable by God to hate sin as sin, and to love good as good. Now, this being disproved in the former instance, must also fall in this. Lastly, The hating of sin as sin, must suppose a different principle, whence that act doth proceed, beside what is in it self sinfull: for, it cannot be conceived that a sinfull principle, as such, can hate it self: and in Scripture, lusting against the flesh, or fighting against the law in our members, which must be a warring against sin as sin, and as proceeding from such a root as the *flesh* or the *old man*, is ever attributed to the *Spirit*, *Gal. 5. 17.* or the *inner man*, and *law of the mind*, *Rom. 7.* which doth necessarily infer a change of the root in these who do hate sin as sin: and therefore this can be within the compass of no hypocrite. Neither will it infringe this, that by experience we find Drunkards, Swearers, and other unrenewed persons, hating not only these acts in themselves; but even in their children; or, that we may find it to have been in our selves before regeneration: This indeed will prove that a natural man may hate that which is sin; but will not prove that he hates it as sin, but as that which is hurtful or shameful to him, or proves disquieting to the peace of his natural conscience, as from the same experience may be gathered; for, these sins in others will never affect them; and there will still be many delightful sins continued in, which, it may be, they will know to be sins, and yet carry no such hatred to them. And though natural men in their judgement may be convinced that sin as sin is hateful, and evil in it self; yet it will not follow that they will actually hate it as such upon that consideration: because there is no particular sin, that from the Word may be gathered to be sin, but a natural mans judgement may be convinced, that as such it is evil; and yet oftentimes do they continue drunk with the love of many of them: because men do not consider and hate ill simply as ill, but as evil to them; even as they desire not that which is good simply, but that which they conceive good to them: and experience daily will make this appear, that the heart loveth not, or hateth not things as they appear simply in themselves, but as it conceives them to be in reference to its present condition. Now, considering sin as sin simply, without reference to any other thing, there is nothing upon that account can be conceived in it that can be hateful to a natural man, who is dead in his sinful condition. It must be therefore for some other respect that he hates any particular ill, as these whom God afterward renews will find in their own experience.

Fifthly, This also will follow, that then there is a difference between the acts of saving Grace, and the acts of common Grace, beside any consideration of the degree thereof: so that this difference may well be said to be in kind, or, *ipsa genere*. We need not be curious in the terms of Physical, or moral differences, this must be a Physical and real difference, as Grace is a Physical and real thing, and doth not only differ from common gifts in respect of the Covenants accepting of such a degree, and not of another; but also in respect of concurring qualifications formerly mentioned: for, an act performed with these qualifications, must either be of the same kind that an act is without them, or it must differ from it because of these qualifications. And if it differ because of these, then is that difference real, flowing from the kind of the act, and not from the consideration of the degree alone; and so not gradual onely.

Lastly,

Lastly, It will follow, that one in the search and trial of the sincerity and savingness of his Grace, is not onely to consider it in the degree thereof, either positive or comparative; but may also look to the nature and kind thereof, and cannot conclude the sincerity of it, except they consider the qualifications formerly mentioned: for, that must be the onely sure way to find out the sincerity of an act, which our Lord Jesus propoeth as the ground of the commendation thereof: but here we see that the grounds upon which He commends both their patience for Him, their respect to Him, and their hating of what was evil, is, not (onely at least) because of any degree, that is considered in these acts; but because of their kind, or qualifications wherewith they are qualified, as it is not patience (that is, patience as it is a Grace) because it suffers so much, or suffers more for Truth, than for any other cause, considered upon the matter; but because their suffering in a good cause was so qualified, as is said: we will see this same to be clear in all other instances, as, it is true saving Repentance, not that which hath the deepest sorrow positively, nor that which hath more sorrow for sin comparatively than pleasure in it, but it is according as the principle and motive are, from which the sorrow proceeds, and by, and according to which it acts: other wayes, no question, Judas his sorrow might have been said to have been true Repentance: which was certainly not only an intense grief; but also comparatively, it affected him more than any worldly loss could affect him, or any pleasure or advantage, which by his sin accreased to him, as the story of the Gospel doth clear. The like may be said of fear, There is no positive or comparative degree can prove it to be saving, this being certain, that for degree some natural men may fear and tremble, and that with anxiety, so as the Lord may be more feared in this manner by them than any other thing else: tryal then must especially be, by considering the principle whereby the person is acted in this fear, the motive that swayes him to it, and the account upon which he acteth on God in it, whereby filial fear is differenced from servile: and this can be by no consideration of the degree, however considered: but must be in respect of the qualifications of the act.

If it should be said, *That it's single respect to God swaying one to sorrow for sin or fear more than any other motive doth; and so in that respect, it may be said to consist in the degree.*

Ans. 1. This supposeth the concurring of positive qualifications. 2. It supposeth the concurring of the same qualifications mentioned. 3. This placeth not the difference in the intenseness of the act onely; but in the qualifications that have influence on it; and so it doth confirm what we said, to wit, that more respect is to be had to the nature of the act, and the qualification thereof in our tryal, than to the degree thereof.

Here it is to be adverted, 1. That in all this discourse of the positive qualifications of sincerity, they are still to be considered with respect to Christ and the Covenant of Grace, so that singleness in the end, taketh in the glorifying and worshipping of God in Christ, and in the motive, the consideration of Gods worth and love, as considered in Him. comes in (as the words, out of the apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, put in the definition of Repentance, do import) and in the reduplication, it acts on Him considered as such, that is, it loves God, fears him, and believes in Him as considered in Christ: and this hath an universal approbation of the way of the dispensation of Grace, and that as proceeding from a principle of life communicate to them by Christ Jesus: whereby they become not only obliged to God for it: but obliged to Him in Christ Jesus. And thus we may see, that this single respect to God and His own goodness for Himself, doth not shut out simply all respect to our own good: for the considering of Him in Christ, cannot but include that; but it derives all our good from that Fountain, and by that Channel *Christ*; and subordinateth all the

thoughts thereof to the praise of Gods Grace in Him. And this is to be remembered throughout: because this doth fully difference true Gospel sincerity from the moral flashes of love, fear, faith, &c. which by some legal work may proceed from natural men, who yet can never act any thing for kind the same with these qualifications: because the considering of God, and acting on Him so by Love, Fear, Faith, &c. is really to call Him and count Him Father in whatsoever degree they be, which hath the promise of acceptance, and is a fruit of the Spirit of Adoption: for, Gods Covenant runs not to him who believes at such a degree; but simply, to him that doth believe, thus qualified, whether his faith or unbelief be more or less: and so the marks run not, these that have Grace or fruits at such a bigness onely; but these that have good fruits in any measure, have them from Christ; and may conclude that the tree is good: and therefore cannot but be accounted living branches, that will never be broken off: which of no hypocrite can be said, who do never bring forth their fruits in Him. And it is hard to say, that fruit brought forth by vertue and communication of life from Christ, doth not differ but in degree from fruit brought forth from, and to our selves. Especially considering, that the Scripture doth contra-distinguish them on that account, without this respect to their degree, as we may gather from *Hos. 14. 8.* being compared with *Joh. 15. v. 2, 4, 5.*

2. We would advert, that this reduplication consisteth not onely in the proposing of such an end, or being acted by such a motive, to wit, a command, &c. but it takes in a singleness in both, and gives such an end and motive the chief consideration in the act, whereby in the practice of duty the heart not onely purposeth the pleasing of God in the giving of obedience to a command, but goes about it as a thing pleasing to God and honourable to Him, and as such doth approve of it; for, a servant may desire to please his Master, and do what he hath commanded, and yet possibly not to be single in it, as it is pleasing to him: which, as we said, is the thing wherein the great pinch of discerning these differencing qualifications will lye.

Learned *Baxter*, in his excellent Treatise of the Saints everlasting rest, *part. 3.* doth otherwise express the Doctrine of the difference and tryal of saving and common Grace, than what hath been usually rested in among practical Divines, which doth necessitate us some way to insist a little further in the clearing thereof. He hath these Assertions, 1. That it is not the Law but the Covenant, that can clear the sincerity of Grace as saving, to wit, as it is accepted by the Covenant as the fulfilling of the condition thereof, *pag. 205. and 206.* 2. He saith that God hath not in the Covenant promised Justification upon any meer act, or acts considered without their degree and suitableness to their object, &c. *pag. 210.* 3. There is no act, considered in its meer nature and kind, which a true Christian may perform, but one that is unsound may perform it also, *pag. 211.* From which he draweth, That wicked men may really rely on Christ, have recumbency on him, love God, &c. *pag. 211. and 237.* and that they may hate sin as sin, and as displeasing to God, *ibid.* 4. He asserts, That the sincerity of saving Grace as saving, lieth materially, not in the bare nature thereof but in the degree; not in the degree considered absolutely in it self, but comparatively as it is prevalent against its contrary, that is, when love adhereth more to God than any other thing, and such like, *pag. 222.* which he endeavoureth to show both in the infused habits, and in the acts of saving Grace: and *pag. 235.* doth assert, That in loving God and Christ as Mediator, there is no more than a gradual difference between the regenerate and unregenerate; and in the end, he doth load the common opinion with many dangerous consequences.

These assertions do seem, at the first, to be expressly contradictory to what hath been said; yet if we will consider the explication thereof, we will not find so great difference in the



matter it self as to be the rise of a new debate and controversie in the Church, wherein there are, alace! too many already; nor any just cause to reject the former received opinion for any prejudice that follows upon it: to which two we shall speak a little.

1. We conceive that the difference will not be found so great as the expressions at first seem to carry, and were it not that this opinion of his, is expressly laid down in opposition to what is commonly received, there might be not to great ground to suspect it: For, 1. the infusing of habits as necessary and antecedent to gracious acts, is acknowledged by both: and expressly, *part. 1. pag. 158. and 159.* he doth condemn the contrary in *Grevinchovius*, at least as an error. And *part. 3. pag. 224.* he hath somewhat to the same purpose. 2. It is not questioned whether true acts of saving Grace have a rational and deliberate prevalency over the opposite lusts, as he asserts, *part. 3. pag. 212, 213.* that will be also granted by all Divines, that though where true Grace is, it may be captivated and not always actually prevail against the opposite suggestions of the flesh; yet in a sober and deliberate frame, the interest of God and spiritual things will have more room in the heart of one that is renewed (as he is such at least) than sinful lusts unto which the flesh doth intice.

3. It is granted also, that beside the act there is necessary for the constituting of it to be saving, a suitableness and adequateness to the object, which we will find in the explication thereof to be almost the same with the positive qualifications, which formerly we did lay down, as *pag. 211. and 212.* he doth thus express it, *The sincerity of the act, as saving, consisteth in its being suited to its adequate object (considered in its respects which are essential to it as such an object) and so to believe in, and love God as God, and Christ as Christ, is the sincerity of these acts; but this lieth in believing, accepting and loving God, as the only supreme God, &c.* where expressly the act is considered as acting upon its object under the reduplication formerly mentioned, and seems to be by him accounted the same with accepting and loving God above all. And again, *pag. 229.* *to will God and Christ above all (saith he) this is to will savingly, which he explains thus, to will God as God, the chief good, and Christ as Christ the only Saviour: and pag. 230.* he saith, that a man may will God and Christ, who by the understanding are apprehended as the chief good (as the Devils do) and yet by not willing Him as so considered, that willing is not saving, and wherefore? It must be because it wants that reduplication: which reduplication in the term *as*, must be indeed extended to the will, as well as to the understanding, as he there asserts; but is not to be restricted to the degree of its act, to speak so, but is to be extended also to the nature of it. Further, we will find the same learned Author elsewhere (to wit, in the Appendix to his Aphorisms, *m. lib. pag. 242.* in answer to the 4. objection) giving the difference between sincere Covenanting with God, and that which is not sincere, where he doth lay down six concurring qualifications, and so concludes thus; *Ye see that there is a great difference between covenanting sincerely and covenanting in hypocrisie, and so between faith and faith, and yet the difference will be found no other thing but what almost is usually asserted by Divines in the like case.*

4. We will find him also come near in expressions, as *pag. 226.* a specific difference is acknowledged: and although he call it a moral specific difference; yet doth he express the same, thus, that it proceedeth from the agreement and conformity of our actions and dispositions to the Law (which determineth of their due-ness) or their disconformity thereunto: again, *pag. 229.* he instances love and delight, &c. as these things wherein sincerity may be tried; (for certainly delighting in God, is a Grace and a commanded duty, as loving of Him is) compare it with *pag. 213, and 214.* he doth

assert that hypocrites may have delight in the same objects (to wit, the knowledge of God and His Works) which are objects also of the delight of the Regenerate; but (saith he) *In the sinner, these delights are nearest of the same nature with the former sensual delights: for it is not the excellency or goodness of God Himself that delighteth them; but the novelty of the thing, &c. as receiving thereby some addition to its own perfection, and not as from God, &c.* and though they delight in studying and knowing God, and Heaven, and Scripture; yet not in God as God or the chief good, nor out of any saving love to God (this contra-distinguishing of saving love, from knowing of God as God, and from hypocritical love, doth seem to place the difference in some other thing than the degree alone) but either because (as some Preachers) they make a gainful trade of it by teaching, others: or, because it is an honour to know these things, or be able to discourse of them, or at best (Nota, if these be their best motives, or the highest account upon which they delight, Then they cannot delight in God as God, which sincere Believers do; nor can they do an act for kind the same: and sith there must be a difference between their delight, and the delight that is gracious in respect of the kind, because they go on different accounts, so must it be in other Graces) as I said before, they delight to know God out of a delight in the novelty, &c. and natural elevation of the understanding thereby; it is one thing to delight in knowing, another in the thing known. And afterward neer the foot of that page, saith, So it is the same kind of delight that such a man (to wit a hypocrite) hath in knowing God and knowing other things: whereby it is clearly insinuated, that it is another kind of delight, which the Believer hath delighting in God, than any unrenewed man can have, seeing it's an other kind of delight than he hath in any other thing. And wherein this kind of difference consisteth we may gather from what is said. 1. There is supposed to be a different principle, to wit, an infused gracious habit, which must precede this act. 2. There is a different end, the one seeketh to please his own curiosity, the other respecteth God and his own spiritual good. There is, 3. a different motive; the one delighteth in it, because it is profitable, or honourable, or pleasing to himself to know such things; the other delighteth in God Himself, as acted therein from the excellency that is in himself, and the love that he hath to himself, and the spiritual satisfaction that he hath in it. 4. There is a reduplication in the act, they not only delight in God, but in him as God, moved thereto out of true love to God, which (saith he) the natural man doth not. Now, these four being granted by the said Reverend Author, and being the very same thing upon the matter with that which formerly we asserted, we may see that beside any consideration of the degree, there must be a concurrence of these qualifications, wherein ordinarily the difference in kind, betwixt saving Grace and common, is placed; and the thing that they call the physical and real difference being acknowledged by him, as by others; it is not of great moment to debate for the terms of physical or moral. Seeing then, upon the one side, the supremacy of Gods interest in the act is not denied, and that in respect to its eminent degree, if it be well understood; and upon the other the concurrence of these qualifications is acknowledged, The difference cannot be great: for understanding of this difference (which must be less than appeared at first) we would consider these two. 1. That when the degree of Grace is spoken of, it may be considered either more strictly, as contra-distinguished from the former qualifications, which in this respect are said to be the kind of the act; or; it may be considered more largely, as it comprehendeth the principle, motive, end, &c. and so it taketh in the former qualifications. It seemeth that this Learned Author, when he speaketh of the degree, doth take it in this large sense; whereas

whereas usually it is taken in the first and strict sense, and this maketh the difference appear greater than it is: and if this distinction might reconcile these mistakes, it were desirable.

2. The supremacy, or precedency and prevalency of the interest of God in us above the interest of flesh (in which alone that Reverend Author doth place the sincerity of saving Grace, *pag. 211. prop. 10.*) may be considered in respect of the degree of the act it self, being compared with the objects whereupon it acts; and so comparatively, that act may be said to be prevalent, suppose of love, fear, sorrow, &c. that loves and fears God more than any other thing, and hath more sorrow for sin than delight in it, &c. or we may consider this supremacy and prevalency of Gods interest in respect of the qualifications of the act, that is, of the end, motive, &c. and thus the interest of God may be said to be prevalent, when it is respect to God Himself, and the souls esteeming of Him as He is God, that maketh it love Him and fear him, and sorrow for dishonouring of Him, so that it's His interest more than any other end or motive that hath influence on these acts: In this latter sense, there is also no difference from what was formerly said; and if that proposition could be so understood, there might be an accommodation: but the instances and explications added by the former Author, seem to limit this prevalency of Gods interest to the act it self, as being only compared with other objects, or as acting on God, or what is approved by Him prevalently, beyond what it doth on other opposite objects. In a word, this, when the good that is in God is considered on the one hand, and the good that is in creatures on the other hand, if the soul choose God and love him beyond any created good, That is accounted by him to be saving sincere love, and the sincerity thereof to consist in this degree alone. From this the ordinary Doctrine differeth especially in these; 1. That usually Divines consider the prevalency of Gods interest to be especially in the motive swaying to the act, and other qualifications, and the act to be sincere, suppose of love, fear, sorrow, &c. not only because it loves or fears God more than any other object; but because, single respect to God and spiritual good, maketh it love Him, fear Him, sorrow for the offending of Him, in what ever degree the act it self be. In the former respect, supposing that an act could be prevalent, to wit, in loving or fearing God more than any other thing, such acts behoved to be accounted sincere and saving without any respect to the motive, or other qualifications of them: and it supposeth that an act may have these qualifications and not be gracious: in the last respect, acts so qualified (supposing that there may be such prevailed over by the violence of other subjects) yet are to be accounted gracious, because so and so qualified, without respect to the degree of the present act; and so, that no act of an hypocrite can be so qualified. 2. The difference is in this, that this Reverend Author doth only constitute the difference in that comparative prevalent degree alone: and therefore expressly asserteth, *pag. 235.* that there is no more but a *gradual difference betwixt the grace that is in an regenerate man and the love that he hath to God, and the common grace and love that may be in one unregenerate*: which would seem to say, that the one may love God on the same consideration and account, and from the same motives that the other may, especially considering that he doth extend this meer gradual difference, both to the habits and acts: and so the question here cometh to this, if there be any other difference than a gradual difference to be inquired for? And this is that which we assert, that there is beside any gradual difference, a difference in kind: (that is, in respect of the former qualifications) betwixt saving and common grace, and that in our search the one is to be inquired for with the other, so that no degree simply can quiet the mind, except it be so qualified as aforesaid. And we conceive that the instances, reasons, similitudes, and Scriptures that are

adduced by that Reverend Author to illustrate and confirm his opinion, will do no more, but this, to wit, shew that when a gracious person is acting rationally, Gods interest will be prevalent with him in degree; and that ever it should be so, and that it is most useful for a Believers clearness that it be so in an high degree. All which are without question: but they will no wayes exclude the qualifications mentioned; but rather do presuppose them, as for example, *pag. 231. 32.* he saith, *That sincere sorrow must be at such a degree that it prevail over our delight in sin and love to it, else it cannot be saving*: although this be true; yet, can any say that this is enough, except the principle, motive, &c. from which it proceedeth, and by which it's qualified be considered, as was formerly hinted? Again, *pag. 234.* he saith, *True love to the brethren consisteth in this degree, that it love them above our honour, wealth, &c.* And, (saith he) *what did the love of some in Queen Maries days want but a more intense degree to make it prevail over love to their houses, to their honour, safety, &c. that it might be sincere?* Beside this intense degree, there might be wanting a right principle, for bringing forth of love, and a right account upon which to love them, without which the hazarding of lives and estates both for them, had never been accounted sincere love before God; and with which, the giving unto them a cup of cold water as in the name of a Disciple, *Matth. 10.* would have been acceptable. And no question, many who through fear, and self love, did keep down the stirrings of sincere love within them, so that it prevailed not to make them publicly own these Sufferers as they should have done; yet might still carry sincere love in their hearts to them, although sinfully they obscured it: which will indeed prove them to be guilty, and their love to be imperfect; but will not prove it altogether to be hypocritical and unsound in the kind thereof: and therefore seeing without these qualifications, no degree can be sufficient to prove the sincerity of an act: and where these are, the act in whatsoever degree cannot but be accounted sincere; it must rather be these that constitute the sincerity of the act, than any degree considered as distinct from them. That assertion therefore, which is, *pag. 238.* *That a hypocrite may love a Godly man for his godliness, or a Christian for Christs sake*, seemeth to be unwarrantable, and utterly to make void that mark of the grace of God, which consisteth in *true love to the brethren*: for, nothing can be conceived in the comparative degree without the kind, but may be in hypocrites: and often these that are sincere will be for a time so captivated with self-love, that they will not evidence their love to others; but see for themselves, as the Disciples did, when Christ was betrayed: yet it cannot be denied but that then they loved him sincerely; and that not in word only, but in deed also. And although it was exceedingly defective; yet unsound it cannot be called: and so may be said of love to others. And considering, that where nature hath dominion, there is still enmity at the seed of God as such, how can it be that a natural man can love, and hate the same person, upon the same account, at one time? It cannot be denied, but natural men may intirely love these that are gracious, and that also their supposing them to be beloved of God, may have some weight with them: yet is not that respect had to them upon this account as they are beloved of God, or like to Him; but at the most, as thereby they may gain Gods love; or have some benefit by their loving of them, or the preventing of some evil, or the confirming of themselves in their security and self-conceited opinion from this that they love such an one, &c. And it appears further in this, that they love not all who are Godly, and hate not, and shun not; all that are opposite to Godliness; and so do not love God and Godliness it self singly as such: because then their own inclination and secret delights, would be hateful to themselves. And yet certainly, all this would be, if Godly men were loved, upon this account,



account, because they are such. Again, *pag. 226.* he illustrateth it by this comparison of eating much and little, to shew that the moral good of an action consisteth in the degree thereof. Now, none will say, that simple shunning of extremes of eating and drinking too much or too little, will constitute an act to be sincerely gracious, and acceptable to God, except it be considered as qualified with its motive and end, to wit, Gods Glory, &c. And elsewhere *gold* (saith he) *is to be tried by weight, not by the touchstone*: now this is true that the quantity of gold is to be tried so, but gold simply is to be tried not only by the weight; and then also Grace is not only to be tried by the degree) yet certainly the reality and truth of it, is to be tried by the touchstone, and it is here the sincerity and truth of Grace that we are inquiring for: and saith he, *Ibid.* it is not the *wrestling*, but the *overcoming*, that the promise is made to, which is true in respect of the promises of full fruition: for, these do presuppose a full and total victorie; but can it be said that no wrestler may be said to have true Grace, or may conclude that he hath it, till he have in this sense fully overcome? That would directly thwart the Authors scope, which is to presse the making of our election and calling sure, and by this debate to help therein: for, upon this ground, none in this life could attain assurance, because this victory that is mentioned in these Scriptures, *Rev. 2. 3. &c. He that overcomes, &c.* is the result of all: that therefore which he asserts, *pag. 243.* cannot be granted, to wit, that *fighting is the same action naturally in both, to wit, in these who overcome, and these who are overcome*, 1 Joh. 4. 5. with 2 Pet. 2. 19, 20. *For both fight, but the valiant, strong, and constant do conquer, when the feeble faint, and cowardly and impatiently do turn their backs and are overcome.*

It may be observed, that though fighting be the same (possibly Physically understood) yet it's one thing to fight valiantly, and stoutly, another to do it cowardly and faintly, or to fight for respect to their Captain, or for love of wages, &c. and so there is a great difference morally between fighting, and also in respect of the positive qualifications thereof: and thus the difference is admitted here. Beside, that word *νικῶντα* in the present, sheweth that the Lord doth reckon a difference before this victory be obtained. And (saith he) the Kingdom of Heaven *suffereth violence*; and violence is no distinct action but a different degree of action. These things (I say) may serve clearly to illustrate what we asserted: for here, fighting's contradistinguished from the victory that followeth it. Now can it be said, that there is no true Grace in the person that fights, or in fighting that he may overcome? And if there be, then the sincerity & truth of Grace consisteth not in this actual overcoming only: nor can it be said, that the renewed fighter wrestleth in the same manner, or that his fighting is in the same kind, considering that he fighteth by his faith, 1 Joh. 5. 4. that he mortifieth the deeds of the flesh by the Spirit, *Rom. 8. 13.* that he putteth on the whole armour of God, *Ephes. 6. &c.* And seeing an unrenewed man, neither hath such weapons or spiritual armour, nor hath a life or dexterity to use them, nor such arguments inducing him to the fight, or such an end before him, or such a principle as is capable, so to be wrought upon, &c. can it be said that his fighting is the same with the former? And that other expression of offering violence to the Kingdom of God, is but a borrowed expression: and therefore ought not so to be made use of here, as if there were stronger and weaker assaults made at Heaven indeed; and as if there needed no more to the weak assault, but a further degree only, when, at least, there must be new conveyed skill and strength, and a new way must be followed for attaining it. For, the scope of that place, is, to shew the necessity of taking hold of Christ by Faith, notwithstanding of what ever impediments and discouragements would scare one in the way: and so it proves, that the Faith of a Believer, is far different from the Faith of a Hypocrite; because

the one steps over difficulties upon the consideration of Gods faithfulness, and by taking hold of Jesus Christ doth prevail in the conquering of Heaven, as if by violence and might they did carry it, whereas others, who never took hold on Him, or by their Faith improved His offices, for the upmaking of their own needs, have no ground of expectation to be admitted to Heaven; and nothing they can do, can be of force to do violence to the Kingdom of God without this. And so in this respect the fighter prevailleth and overcometh, and gaineth Heaven: because, as the Apostle saith, he striveth *lawfully*, 2 Tim. 2. 5. and because he fighteth in the right manner; & his fighting is not, not to be accounted sincere, till he overcome; but he overcometh because it is sincere; and so it's sincere before that. Beside, the native exposition of that place, looketh to a violence peculiarly called-for in that time: for, *since the dayes of John Baptist*, saith the Text, which will concern this nothing. For indeed then, there was a great difficulty to get the Messiah closed-with as already incarnate, and to lay by all Types, as now having their accomplishment. By all which, we think it is more agreeable to Truth, to continue the received Doctrine of inquiring for the Truth and sincerity of Grace in the kind thereof, and not in the degree only. For further confirming whereof, (beside what is said) we shall first shew that there is a real difference between the habits of saving Grace in the Regenerate, and the common dispositions that may be in hypocrites. 2. We shall shew that there is such a difference also in the acts of saving Grace, in respect of these former qualifications, beside the consideration of the prevalency of the degree, and the acts that may be in hypocrites. And, 3. That this new opinion, hath no more advantage With it, than the former; but that it hath the same inconveniencies, (if they be inconveniencies) which are alleged against the former, waiting upon it and others also besides these.

1. That the infused habits of Grace which are called the *new nature, seed of God, the unction, and spirit*, &c. do differ from the habits and dispositions that are in unrenewed men and hypocrites, and that by a real and Physical difference even in kind, may thus be made out, 1. If the *Flesh* and *Spirit*, &c. be different in kind, having different originals, and different effects &c. Then Grace, thus considered in a renewed person, must be different in kind from what is, or can be in any hypocrite: because the one is *Spirit*, the other is still *Flesh*: and there is no mids between a natural and a renewed man, and what proceedeth from them as such: for, what is born of the one, is *Spirit*; and what is born of the other, at what ever length it be, it's *Flesh*: But the former is true; *Flesh* and *Spirit* are most opposite in all the former respects: this, to wit, the *Spirit*, is an immediate effect of a Physical operation of the Grace of God working a change upon the heart; and so must have some suitable Physical thing in the nature of it, different from any thing which is not produced by the same cause, or by the same manner of causality; such as common dispositions are: and in the effects, there is contrariety, the one lusteth against the other, for the one is contrary to the other, *Gal. 5. 17.* and therefore there must be some real, Physical difference between these, whose causes and effects are so different. 2. If they do not differ in kind, then it is either because they are both fruits of the Spirit, and that equally, or, because neither of them is so, or, because that which is of the Spirit savingly, doth not differ from that which is not saving. Now, none of these can be affirmed. Concerning the last, this only can be said for answer, that although nature and saving Grace may differ so, yet common Grace cannot be said to make such a difference, it being also a fruit of the Spirit. And to this we reply, If these common gifts can be consistent with a dominion of sin, and compleat deadnesse therein, and saving Grace cannot be consistent with these, Then there must be a real difference, seeing saving Grace not only importeth

importeth a relative change of a man, to wit, that he is justified, but also a real and Physical change, to wit, that he is a new, or renewed creature, which by no common Gifts or Graces can be: But the former is true. And therefore again, 3. If saving Grace be somewhat Physical, (to speak so) and constituteth a Physical difference between a man that hath it and others; yea, between a man and that which formerly he himself was; and if common Grace cannot do that, but the man that hath it and no more, is the old man still, and in nature, Then there must be a Physical difference between them: But the former is true. Ergo. For, this is ever certain, a man is either renewed or unrenewed and in nature, there is no mids: Now if there be any difference that is Physical between these two (which must be, as there is between a good tree and an evil, a new creature and an old, and not as between a little creature, and one that is more big: for, new and old respect the kind (Then habitual Grace must differ from all other common works Physically: because it is that which constituteth this difference. Adde, 4. These common dispositions may vanish or never be so through, but the person which hath had them may perish: which cannot be said of saving Grace, called the *Seed of God, immortal, and incorruptible*, that remaineth in them that once had it, &c. especially, considering that it is called *immortal*, in respect of the nature of it: and that, that continuance is one of the properties thereof. For although nothing of it self be eternal, and immortal but God; yet it cannot be denied but what the Lord intendeth to make immortal, He doth otherwise fit and qualify it for that end than other things, as we see in the difference that is between Angels and other creatures, and the souls and bodies of men, and of that glorious conformity that shall be put on the glorified Members of Christ unto their head. And though (as he saith) that all, both Philosophers and Divines do say more; yet this is enough: which also the forementioned Author acknowledgeth in the Appendix to his Aphorisms, pag. 240. And saving Grace being of the same nature with Glory, it were hard to say, that a man in nature, did for kind partake of the Divine nature, and of the first fruits of the Spirit and Glory, who, yet may be tormented in hell for ever. Lastly, The multiplying of these common gifts, could never alter the tree and make it good; so as if it were possible that they might grow to the greatest height and bignesse, they would be still but common gifts, seeing they grow from that root: therefore the tree must first be good, ere the fruit be good. Now common gifts never being able to alter the tree, as is said, there must therefore be a difference between them and saving Grace in some other thing than in the degree. And indeed if these dispositions be of the same kind with gracious habits, then the root of common and saving Grace would be one; which the Scripture doth still differ, and in this respect the habit hath not its sincerity from the acts, as if it were gracious, because the acts thereof are thus comparatively prevalent; but the acts, are gracious and prevalent, and cannot but be so, because they proceed from such an habit; and the habit is first gracious, before the acts thereof be sincere: and therefore there must be a real and Physical difference in the habit it self from common dispositions, as it is considered (at least) in order of nature, before the acts: and so, the difference doth not only lye in the acts themselves. Neither can it be said here, that habits and dispositions do not differ in kind: therefore, that difference is not to be sought here: for, beside that this Assertion will find opposition among Philosophers, it can no wayes be acknowledged here, where the habit is not natural, nor acquired. And certainly the names and titles, whereby the Scripture doth set forth this habitual Grace, (as the *New-nature, Spirit, New-man, New-creature, God's workmanship, His Seed, the Heart of Flesh &c.* whereby it is not only contradistinguished in its kind from nature and flesh, taken in their most grosse conception; but from

all common gifts of the Spirit also) do hold forth a real difference to be between them.

2. Concerning gracious acts, that are fruits of this Spirit and grow upon this tree of habitual Grace, mainly the question is here, If that act of love, whereby a Believer loveth God, doth differ any other way than gradually, from that act of love whereby an unrenewed person loveth Him, or which he while unrenewed had unto Him, that is, that the one loveth Him above all and the other doth not, though both love Him really and in the same kind for the nature of the act? And so if this be not the only mark by which the sincerity of all Graces are to be tried? whereof this is a particular instance.

To say somewhat to this, we conceive, that the truth and reality of sincere saving Grace in its acts is otherwise to be inquired for, than in such a degree only: for, true love loveth God above all, because that is the nature of true Grace as such, to have such acts: and so it is rather a consequent following on, or a concomitant of true Grace where it is sincere, than that which constitutes the truth and sincerity thereof: although it may well (being rightly understood) evidence that: even as a Woman that loveth her Husband chastly, cannot but love him beyond any other; yet doth not that constitute the sincerity of her love; because an Adulteress may do so to an Adulterer; But especially, it is in loving him as her Husband, and according to that relation: otherwise we suppose it is not impossible for a Wife to love her Husband, beyond any other man, and yet not to do it with true conjugal love, but possibly upon some worldly (and it may be sinful) principle: which if contraried, would soon discover that love not to be sound, as not loving him as her Husband, but for some other advantage or satisfaction, as often experience doth clear: and must not that differ from the love of another, who cleaveth to the Husband out of conscience and affection, from that conjugal relation that they stand in, and because he is her Head, even when many crosses and discontentments occur to her in her adhering to him? So it may be in other cases, a Servant may fear his Master more than any man, as a Son may do his Father; yet that there is difference in that fear (although both agree in the comparative degree, and neither of them dare offend him (none will deny. This difference then, must be in the formality of it, (to speak so) as the same person is distinctly or differently considered by the one, and the other; and as they are differently swayed, and acted in the same thing, as in the instance of filial and servile fear, is ordinarily illustrated: much more may this be conceived in the acting of grace on God, there being so many relations under which we may consider Him, and act on Him. And may it not be supposed that a Woman may at first love a Man above all others, and yet not love him for himself conjugally, who afterward being Married to him, may come to love him on other principles, and from other grounds and though there be no difference in the comparative degree, and the first possibly seemed to be most vehement; yet is there a difference really betwixt what it was, and what it is. And if this may be in moral and natural acts, may it not be much more in spiritual saving acts, when compared with those that are not so? It's upon this ground that the acute Divine *Cameron* doth expressly assert, that the love whereby a Wife loveth her Husband, doth differ *specie* from that whereby she may warrantably love another, so that if she loved any other in the least degree with that kind of love wherewith she loveth her Husband, she were really an Adulteress. And this is when he is speaking of that question, *Num Christus Mediator sit adorandus?* intending thereby to shew, that that kind of love, adoration, &c. which is due to God, can be given to none other in any degree, without manifest impiety. And will it look well, to say that warrantably we may give love and fear, &c. of the same kind to men and creatures, which we are called to give to God? and that only the



degree to Him, is comparatively to be supream; yet upon the former assertion, this will necessarily follow: for, if a Believers love, fear, &c. differ no otherwise from the love, fear, &c. of hypocrites. Then that act of love which he hath to God, must be of the same kind with what he hath to Wife, Children, &c. except in the degree: which yet I suppose he would be mightily affected within himself, to approve himself to do so in the least degree. We say then, that the sincerity of Grace is not to be inquired alonerly in this prevalent and predominant comparative degree thereof; but there must be some other things concurring, at least, that constitute the difference betwixt saving acts of spiritual Grace, and these common acts which may be in hypocrites. For, if these two may be separated, that is, if there may be this comparative degree, in the common gifts or graces which an hypocrite may have, Then that which constitutes the difference of the sincerity of Grace, cannot consist in that only: for, that must be proper to saving Grace *quarto modo*, which doth difference it from all other things: but we may see in instances, that if we consider this degree without respect to any other thing, it may be found where saving Grace or sincerity is not; and contrarily, saving Grace may be (at least in respect of particular acts) where that degree is not. Therefore it is not that alone wherein properly, and essentially the difference doth consist.

Before we give any instances, we would premit some advertisements, especially concerning the first, which may possibly look strange-like to some, to wit, that there may be such a comparative degree of love, fear, sorrow &c. in hypocrites, who yet have nothing of sincere Grace; and that therefore sincerity is not to be tried by that comparative degree alone. Concerning which it's to be adverted,

First, That when we say, there may be in an hypocrite such a degree of love, fear, &c. that may be comparatively prevalent, that is not to be understood, as if there were love, fear, &c. in sincerity in the least degree in any hypocrite; but only this, that seeing it's certain (and this Learned Author asserteth it) that hypocrites upon carnal considerations may love and fear God in some respects, which yet is out of no true respect to God: so it may be supposed, that upon the same considerations they may come to love Him, or fear Him above any other object comparatively. Certainly upon this supposition, that it were at that degree upon these carnal considerations, it would still be but of the same kind of which it was, to wit, carnal and hypocritical love, and servile fear. Neither can this supposition be thought strange, Seeing, 1. No hypocrite can fear God sincerely more than love Him; yet that such an one may, upon apprehensions of Gods terror, fear His wrath more than all the world beside, cannot be denied. 2. Seeing also it's but some carnal motive that leadeth natural men to love any thing most, why should it be thought impossible, that upon such motives and considerations, they may be swayed to love God most? Especially considering what flashes of joy may be in temporary Believers (although they continue not) and what may be supposed to have been in *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan. 4.* and *Darius*, *cap. 6.* and possibly in many hypocrites amongst the *Jews* and others, upon some signal manifestations of Gods goodness to them; yet, even the supposition of the being of such a thing, although it actually had never been, Even that were enough for confirming of what we say. 3. It cannot be denied but hypocrites may have a zeal of God, which may bear great sway with them and more than any meer temporal thing, as in the instance of the *Jews*, *Rom. 10.* Yet there cannot be zeal of any kind without love of that same kind; yea, zeal presupposeth love, and that in an high and intense degree. But we shall offer some instances afterward.

Secondly, It would be adverted, that we do not assert that hypocrites may thus love or fear God habitually, and (to say so)

in their ordinary strain: nay, we think it extraordinary to them to attain even to this; and that it followeth upon the back of some extraordinary manifestation, either of Gods love, wrath, terror, &c. If it be said, that this meeteth not the question. *Ans.* Indeed that Reverend Author, stateth it upon habitual and deliberate acting; yet, considering that the thing enquired in here, is the sincerity of particular gracious acts: if there can be any particular act which hath that comparative degree, and yet is not sincere, nor will prove the person to be gracious; Then it will follow that the sincerity of particular gracious acts, is not alone, nor mainly to be enquired for in that.

Thirdly, It would be remembered, that when we speak of this prevalency in the comparative degree, that we take not the phrase largely, as including the motive, end, &c. or Gods interest swaying to such an act, by such a spiritual motive, &c; but strictly, according as we held it forth in two distinctions, mentioned before this. Gods interest then in this act, is not to be considered, as it respecteth motives, and compareth all these; amongst which respect to Him doth sway; but it's to be understood, as it respects the act only, without respect to the motive, what ever inducement it be that persuadeth thereto. Other-wise, as we said, the difference is but in expressions: and it's not our purpose to contend for words. And therefore in such an explication, we shall acquiesce, as to this, and we profess not to dispute against that.

If it be said, that the loving of God so comparatively above any thing, is not to love Him above all: because that for which we love Him, is more beloved by us, even though thereupon we should be induced to give our lives for His Cause, &c. *Ans.* 1. It's true, this proveth it not to be sincere love, or to proceed from right principles and motives, as is said; and this is not intended: for even such a person hates God really, as was formerly asserted. Yet, secondly, it's such love as hypocrites use to have to other things, to wit, that love wherewith they love the world, their Patrons and Idols of any sort, which is certainly still from some selfish principle or motive: and therefore indeed still they love themselves best; yet are they said to have such things to be their Idols, and comparatively to love them above all other things, even above the Lord Himself, although it be such a motive as prevaileth with them for that end: and may not the same be acknowledged here, supposing that the Lord may for a time get that from a man upon carnal considerations which some Idol useth to have? Thirdly, We conceive it will be, in this case, *argumentum ad hominem*: for, this Reverend Author instanteth the prevalency of love to God and the Brethren, not in the motives that swayeth to love them most; but in the acts, being compared with other objects, that is, if God be loved above His temporal good things, if the Saints be loved more than our estate, place, &c. so as we can quite all these for them, as the former instances do clear. Now supposing it may be made out, that as to the effects, hypocrites may to love God and the Saints, as to abandon all their temporal satisfactions for them, and possibly even their life (which is the only thing that that Reverend Author saith was desiderated in the love of some in *Queen Marits* dayes, *pag. 237. 238. 239.*) though still upon carnal principles and motives: Then it will follow that the assertion as formerly understood, will be sufficient to oppose that proposition, that the difference betwixt saving and common grace is only gradual, and that in respect of such a degree as is explained. Now we come to instances.

1. We may find it in love: one that is an hypocrite, may in some respect (as is qualified) love God above all: For, 1. May it not be said from the zeal that many *Jews* had, that they loved God above all, and out of their blind zeal would have preferred Him to their lives, or what else was dear to them? Yea, 2. Was not that in *Paul* while yet a Pharisee before his Conversion, who in some respect had that testimony from his Conscience, that

zeal and love to God put him to all that he did, so that it is like he could have suffered the losse of all things in that quarrell; yet, it cannot be said, but that his love to God after his Conversion was exceedingly different from what it was before, although in this comparative degree it might be some way the same, to wit, he loved above all before; and he continued to do so thereafter, but with love, far otherwise qualified, than formerly he did. If it be said, that although the *Jews* and *Paul* had a zeal of, and did love God above all; yet, was it not according to knowledge, as is said, *Rom. 10.* and so could not be accepted by the Covenant as sincere love. *Ans.* This is truth, and doth confirm our assertion: for, wherefore was it not accounted sincere, and as such accepted? It cannot be said simply, because they loved some other thing better: for, the degree of their zeal and love, is not controverted; but it is in respect of the qualifications thereof, *it was not according to knowledge*, that is, in a word, not regulated and qualified in respect of the principle, end, motive, and account thereof, according to the rule whereby true love should vent, which in their ignorance they could not do; and therefore still there is some thing beside this degree necessary to the constituting of the sincerity of love, that it may be acceptable: and so in other acts, this must ever be presupposed, that they be according to knowledge, that is, 1. That the matter of it be right in it self. 2. That the manner be according to the rule prescribed, that is, not only Gods glory for the end, but the glorifying of Him according as He requireth and prescribeth. 3. That both these be known to the person. And, 4. That as such he perform them; and upon that account, act in them, as they agree to His will: otherwise it can never be accounted to be an act according to knowledge, as in the former instance is clear: whereby it appeareth, that the sincerity of an act, and this prevalent comparative degree thereof, may be separated.

Thirdly, That men may love their Idols above all, cannot be denied, seeing men are naturally mad upon their Idols, so *Turks* love their *Mahomet*, *Baal's* Prophets their *Baal*, even beyond their own lives. Now, may not one love God and Christ, as one may love *Mahomet* or their Idols? This Argument is also made use of by the forced Author, to prove that a natural man may love Christ really for kind, *pag. 236, 237.* And will not this same hold in respect of the degree also? Considering that there is as good ground, and more, even in a humane respect, for Historical faith to believe the truth of the being and worth of God, and Jesus Christ, and as much proof and experience of the advantages and benefits that come from him, as there are for any to be assured of the being and worth of *Mahomet*, *Jupiter*, *Apollo*, &c. Now suppose one that formerly loved *Mahomet*, or *Jupiter*, above all, should by the force of Historical faith, or some extraordinary deliverance be brought to account of, and love the only true God, as he did formerly love *Mahomet* or his Idols, could that be accounted to be sincere love, because the object were changed? Supposing still no change to be in the man, nor intrinsically in the act it self in respect of its kind? and yet upon the supposition foresaid, this act would not be defective in respect of the comparative degree, supposing him to love God now, as formerly he did his Idol: It must therefore be in kind. And may not such acts as have proceeded from *Nebuchadnezzar* and other hypocrites, upon special and singular appearances of God, be accounted such, wherein there was some kind of reality as to their actual esteeming of God above all; yet still being without sincerity, as the zeal of the *Jews* was, because God was not esteemed of according to knowledge, that is, as in Christ Jesus: in which respect He hath manifested Himself in His Word, and without which, there can be no degree of love acceptable to Him.

Fourthly, Might not one have loved Christ above all, while He was upon earth, from the convictions of the worth that was

evidently seen in Him, and from particular favours, received from Him, suppose of health, freedom from the rage of the devil, &c. as one man may love another, especially His benefactor above all things, so that He may become his Idol? Now, suppose it had been so (which was not impossible) that men had known and loved Christ thus after the flesh (as the Apostle speaketh, *2 Corinth. 5. 17.*) could that have proven that love to be sincere? And yet the fault, is not in respect of that degree.

Again, we may instance it in faith: for, that one may trust Christ in some respect above all, is clear by the many examples of the faith of miracles, and that both active, and passive; yet is it also clear that saving faith is of another nature, and hath other qualifications concurring in it's acting as such: the first acteth on Him, as powerful to bring forth such an act, and in respect of some particular manifestation of His Will for the bringing forth thereof; the other considereth Him as a Saviour offered to us by Gods faithfulness in the Word; and for that end, to wit, Salvation: and upon that account, to wit, as offered, and as such, it receiveth Him and resteth on Him, being moved thereunto by its giving credit to the faithfulness of God in respect of His Covenant and offer of special Grace. So, to be willing to have Christ, is a main act of Faith; and that one in nature may in some respect be willing to have Christ and Heaven above all, cannot be denied, especially by this Author. Neither can it be said, that this respect to God and Christ, is inferiour to their love to earthly blessings, which they prefer to Him, as is insinuated, *pag. 237.* for certainly they may esteem Him beyond temporal blessings: therefore they will suffer the losse of these, and their life it self upon this presumptuous ground of gaining Him by the abandoning of these; yet cannot that be accounted sincere willing, because they will Him not as such, and according to the terms of His Covenant.

Further it may be instanced in fear, repentance, love to the brethren, &c. as was formerly hinted: wherein we will find that natural men may come to this comparative degree in respect of the external object, to wit, to fear God more than to fear men, or any other thing; to sorrow for sin in such a degree, that it may prevail over delight in it, and love to it: wherein the comparative degree that constituteth the sincerity thereof, is instanced, *pag. 231, 232.* and they may love the brethren so as to relieve, clothe, visite them, &c. and for this end to part with their own ease and estate, which is the degree that is only marked as wanting to such as loved the Saints; but yet could not part with temporal things for them, *pag. 239.* and upon this ground it is, we conceive, that *pag. 232.* this necessary advertisement is given. *That these graces which are expressed by the passion, as fear, love, joy, &c. are not so certainly to be tried by the passion that is in them as by the will that is contained in them or supposed to them:* which must either be to shew, that sometimes the vehemency of the passion may seem more towards one object, suppose in fear of men, or love to creatures; when yet the will rationally feareth and loveth God more: or, it is added to shew that something must be respected in the trial beside the degree simply; so that this degree is not to be accounted the alone mark of trial: otherwise this advertisement were needlesse. And what is spoken of the will its acting rationally in its act, as contradicting from the passion, or act of the sensitive part, must infer some concurring qualifications to be necessary in the act of the will, which cannot be in the sensitive part, which doth necessarily infer a tacite acknowledging of the necessity of observing something in the nature of the act, beside this degree alone, for the evidencing of the sincerity thereof.

On the other side, may not habits for a time be without acts, at least, without acts prevalent in respect of this degree? Now then, what shall be judged of such acts, suppose of love, fear, faith, &c. which for a time are prevailed over, and the heart is led captive by the opposits? They cannot be denied to be



sincere acts of Grace; nor can it be said, that there are none such at all: for, in that one place, *Rom. 7.* we will find the Apostle speaking of such motions of the Spirit or Inner-man, which yet prevail not as to the effect, but the heart is led captive over them, so that what he would, that he doth not; and he is led captive to the law of sin, over the law of his mind; yet, even then doth he acknowledge these acts of the Inner-man to be sincere acts of Grace: and therefore doth comfort himself in them; and doth oppose them to the law of sin in his members, which otherwise he could not do. And this sincerity cannot flow from this degree, which then is not: it must therefore flow from the kind thereof, and so be contradistinguished in that respect from any common work of a hypocrite. If it be said here, that it is true *love, faith, &c.* that in its sober, composed and deliberate rational actings doth prefer God, although at fits and times it may be overpowered; and that in this respect *Paul* did in his deliberate actings, prevail over the Law of his members, though by its surprizals it did captivate him. *Ans.* Although this be granted to be truth; yet it will not infringe the Argument: because we ask not only what *Paul* was in respect of his state, or of his deliberate acting, but what these motions and stirrings of the Spirit in him were, that were overpowered, whether even these were gracious and sincere, or not? For, if these stirrings be acts, as is acknowledged, *pag. 224.* they must either be sincere, or not; it cannot be said, *not*, upon the grounds formerly given; they must be then sincere: and if sincere, then they must be sincere, not in respect of the prevalency of the degree; but in respect of the nature of the act itself, as is said. For although we say that such a person did in his rational acting of *love, &c.* prefer God above all; yet that would only prove that the person were habitually gracious, and a true lover of God; or, prove that once he hath had acts truly sincere; but that could never be the ground upon which the sincerity of these present acts could be founded. And so as the close of all, seeing this prevalent degree may be separated from sincere acts, and may be in acts that are not sincere in the manner qualified *& contra*: Therefore the formal reason of sincerity, is not to be inquired in it alone. If it be said, that even in such acts wherein corruption prevaileth in the affection or passions; yet Grace is still prevalent in the will. *Ans.* Then whether can it be said that there is no true Grace in the affections, or, whether the actings thereof in them be not sincere, although not prevalent? If they be gracious, even as such, Then the Argument doth still hold, that Grace may be sincere where it prevaileth not as to the effect: if it be denied that they are sincere as such, Then it will follow that true Grace is not universal as to the subject thereof; or, that it may be sincere in the will and not in the affections: which yet are acts of the same Grace and soul, in so far as renewed, striving with it self in so far as unrenewed. Beside, prevalency is but in the will as renewed, so that it is only as such induced to dissent or consent; whereas that same *will*, as unrenewed, yeeldeth over that dissent of the renewed will: whereby it cometh to passe that acts are elicited thereby, which the renewed part did oppose; and so indeed, as to the effect, the renewed will is not prevalent: because that is not acted, which it would be at; yea, acts are elicited by the will, as is said, which, had the renewed part been prevalent, had not been at all, which sheweth that in such a case there is a prevalency, even in the will.

If it be said further, That the love wherewith natural men love God, as it is formerly described, is but still self love: because they love not God as God; but upon some other self-account: and therefore do still love themselves more; and so do not love God above all sovereignly: because they love Him not for the goodnesse that is in Himself; whereas if Gods interest were main and chief in that love, it were to be accounted sincere; and this presupposing the habits to be infused, this so-

veraign interest of God in the act will take in the end, motive, and that which we called the reduplication of the act. *Ans.* If that Assertion, that sincerity doth lye in the comparative prevalent degree, be thus explained, as to take in Gods interest as sovereign in the end, motive, and formal consideration of the act, Then it cometh indeed to be one: and if so, then there were no reason to fall out with the Doctrine that ordinarily is delivered concerning this: and, for the expressions we will not contend, as we formerly said: but when we consider the explication of the Author, especially as it is opposed to the common Doctrine, it seemeth that he meant the sovereignty of Gods interest in respect of objects, compared together, that is, God more sovereignly loved, feared, and trusted, than any other; and doth not take in the consideration of God in the motive, end, and formal consideration of the act, which hath influence on the person for bringing forth of such an act; and so on the act itself, that is brought forth: for, the comparison runneth thus, betwixt the objects, *fish* and *spirit*, who doth prevail most on the heart, but is not in comparing the motive and other qualifications of that act, which materially is spiritual: and therefore still in that respect, the former Argument will hold, and the ordinary expressions will suit better to the thing.

It may be further argued against the placing of the nature of sincerity in the prevalent degree alone, Thus, If the acts of saving grace be sincere, before they be in this degree prevalent, Then this prevalency of the degree, cannot be the thing that constitutes the sincerity thereof, much lesse alone be it; But the former is truth, That act of love, faith, &c. is saving, which is wrestling against its opposits, so as to win the heart to love God more than all other objects, even before it attain it: For, we are to suppose this method, 1. Gracious habits are supposed as infused, whereby the tree is made good. Then 2. That these habits have their inclinations and acts, that lust against the flesh, and fight with the flesh for winning of the heart to the following of its motions: and as fighting goeth before the Victory; so in this spiritual combate, do these lustings and actings go before the prevalent degree, and by these the heart is engaged to love God above all; whereupon followeth that prevalency as a degree of Victory. And yet we suppose, that were the least sparkle of grace kindled in the heart, so that it were but smoking in desires of love to God and faith in Him, it cannot be denied to be sincere; although it hath not broken out in a flame. For, if this prevalent degree be in some respect an effect of these stirrings, these stirrings must be sincere before they come this length, as to prevail: for, they were acts before, and if not gracious acts, then how could acts that are of themselves unsound, produce an effect that is sincere, seeing the cause must be of the same nature, and as noble as the effect? And so consequently its sincerity doth not flow from this degree; but on the contrary rather, this degree is attained by these stirrings, because such stirrings, are acts of sincere love and grace: whereas they are extinguished in another, and come not up that length (at least in the former respects) because these stirrings were for their kind unsound: and so nativly the actings and stirrings of grace of any kind, must go before, either the prevalency or repulse thereof. For, supposing creatures once to have the heart of man, there is first an essaying (as it were) by some inward motions to gain the heart from these, before actually it be gained. Now, we say, that which maketh some motions gain the heart deliberately to prefer God above all, is, because these motions are sincere, and do suppose as antecedaneous to that degree, at least in order of nature, 1. An inward gracious principle fitting the heart so to conceive of God, and making it capable to be swayed by spiritual and supernatural motives, and in sincerity to act on them as such.

2. It presupposeth an actual putting forth of this gracious principle in its considering God as such a good in Himself, and for its happiness in Himself desirable, and lovely in an other kind than any creature: Whereupon, 3. The heart is actually inclined as being swayed by such a motive, to wit, the goodness of God Himself, and the spiritual happiness that is in enjoying of Him, and as such, and upon that account to love Him, desire Union with Him, and prefer Him above all; whereby *self* (as it is properly *self*, sinful and corrupt) is shut by, and a spiritual motive beareth sway in the act, and so must be supposed in order of nature (at least) to be before it. 4. When the heart is thus affected towards God, then the former three (to wit a spiritual end, the enjoying of God, a spiritual motive, that is, a respect to his worth, and a spiritual principle whereby he was enabled so to conceive of him) do concur for the eliciting of this act, and that in a new manner, upon that object so considered; whereupon it acts otherwise in the closing with God as God, than ever formerly it did. Upon which this prevalent degree and Victory doth follow, as the result of the hearts so acting on God, which cannot but prevail. And thus it loveth God above all, and shutteth down all competitors, because considering Him as such as he is, and to it in respect of the understandings uptaking of him, it doth for such an end, from such a motive, by such a principle, and in such a manner, act on Him, as so considered; which others do not, who though they may have a sort of striving in them; yet their fighting, not being according to the former qualifications, can never prevail; as it cannot but in the end be a Conquerour in them that thus fight.

Further, supposing this sincerity to ly in that prevailing comparative degree, we ask, what maketh the love which is in one to prevail, so as to love God above all, more than in another? Or what made *Paul*, after conversion, love God in that respect sincerely, more than before? It must be said, that it floweth from the intervening work of the Spirit, both operating in the infusing of habits, and co-operating in the bringing forth of acts; whereby *Paul*, is now enabled to do that which could not be done, till first the tree was made good. And if so, then there must be a real difference in the act itself, as being the fruit of another tree, or of a tree that is changed: and if the trees be different in kind, the fruits must be so also: for grapes are not gathered of thistles; nor *contra*: and so must it be said of these acts, either they proceed from different habits, and so must differ in kind; or, both must be from a gracious habit: which cannot be granted, seeing often these acts in hypocrites vanish, which of gracious habits cannot be asserted: and to say that different infused habits are not requisite to either, will not be urged by any, as hath been said.

We adde that acts of love that flow from common dispositions in a natural man, may be considered as acts before they be thus prevalent: for, he *loves, fears, &c.* and so they be acts, although not gracious acts or sincere; but we cannot consider the acts of the gracious habits of *love, faith, fear, &c.* (as that a man, as renewed, doth *love, fear, &c.*) but we must conceive them as such to be gracious and sincere: for, they are of the Spirit, and what is of it, is of that kind; and what is but like to a grain of mustard seed, and cannot be considered as less, is yet saving and true Grace, having the qualifications fore said; the least blossom on that tree being good fruit: therefore there must be some difference in kind between common acts, and these of saving Grace, beside any thing that can be conceived to be in the degree: because in the one, the qualifications may be, and are separated from the act; but in the other, no act can be conceived as influenced by the Spirit, and proceeding from it, but it must be conceived as having these qualifications in it, to wit, it hath a spiritual end, is swayed by a spiritual motive, and acteth from a spiritual principle, and as such, is sway-

ed to such an act. If it be said, that it is the least degree of Grace when it is sincere, that is so to be accounted, that is when it is so prevalent; and that in that respect no act as such, is in the least degree prevalent, but it is sincere. *Ans.* That will not satisfy: for, here it is asserted that the act of love as proceeding from these habits, cannot be conceived as an act: but must also be conceived as gracious, and as arising from that root, but according to the other opinion, these may be separated, that is, although love act; yet is it not sincere love, till it act prevailingly; and so it may be considered as an act before it come to that prevalent degree of acting, which cannot be in the other. Beside, if so, then were not saving Grace, Grace, as having a different original from common gifts; but as having different fruits or effects, or different degrees of fruits. For clearing whereof, we may suppose gracious habits to be in one. And, 1. do not the acts of *love, faith, fear, &c.* proceed from these infused habits; and are they not actings of the new-creature? And, 2. Are not these acts gracious as such? and because they are such; they are saving and sincere, that is, because acts of the New-nature. 3. Do not these habits fit and qualifie one to act otherwise than one can do who hath not these habits; and that not only in respect of degree, but in respect of kind? Otherwise these habits would not be a different principle from common dispositions, or, as infusing a different life, but helping one to exercise the life which he had: which were absurd. 4. Do not men who are so fitted by these habits, act accordingly in the producing of their acts otherwise than any other who is not so qualified? And so, 5. must not then the acts produced, be differenced, which are thus differently produced? And wherein can this difference consist but in the kind? For, if it be said, they differ, because these gracious habits bring forth acts in that prevalent degree, wherein the Lords interest hath the chiefest room, then it may be enquired, 1. Is that the alone difference? or can it be said that the new life hath no influence even on the manner of acting? considering that the person is furnished with new qualifications, both in the understanding, will, and affections: and these cannot but concur in the act; and yet must concur differently in respect of what one in meer nature can do. 2. It may be enquired, could that man have brought out these acts without these habits? And if not, they must be then different in kind from what formerly he did bring forth, seeing they could not be produced without a new and different cause. 3. Neither can any acts proceeding from these habits be accounted common acts; they must then, even the least of them be saving. And 4. If they be saving, and that as acts simply, it must be because of something that is in their kind, without respect to their degree; as the least motions and actings of corruption are sin, because they are from flesh, even when by Grace they are kept from victory: So is it, on the contrary, with the least motions of the Spirit.

Yea, if we were strictly considering this very difference, as it is proposed in respect of the prevalent comparative degree, we will find it to infer a real difference in the kind of the act, beside this comparative degree: for (suppose in the act of sincere love) by one the Lord is preferred, and all other objects are rejected; by another, He is loved, but some other thing is preferred to Him: now that act of love, which respects God as the chief good, and as such closeth with him, must be different in kind from that that taketh him, but not as the chief good: and therefore loveth some other thing more. For, in this act there is not only a comparing of God with other things, but an act resulting from that comparison: whereby the heart of one faith, when this question is proposed, *Is God thy chief good?* *Yea*: and so positively it closeth with him as such: in the other, when the heart compareth, it saith, *Nay, God is not the chief good*: and therefore closeth not with Him as such, but refuseth



refuseth him. Now these two, *may* and *ya*, to accept of Him as such, or to refuse Him, must differ oppositely, and not in degree only. For the consideration of God here in the act of the heart, is not simply if he be good: for, that cannot come under consideration, but if He be the chief good, and so to it, and if it will take him as such; and so that act of love to Him must be such as determineth that question by *ya*, or *may*; and in that respect the one yieldeth, the other rejecteth. Therefore here it is not yielding in this or that degree, but yielding or refusing; which in that *pinch* are contradictory. 2. By the one act of love, God getteth the chief room, and other things are casten down: it is quite contrary in the other; and can these two be of one kind? Or can that act of love which preferreth many things to Him, act for its kind on God, as that act of love that taketh Him as infinitely preferable to all? Because the one considering Him as the chief good, accordingly loveth Him; and the other, not doing so, but otherwise, This difference must follow thereupon. 3. That act wherein there is this prevalency, must either have somewhat peculiar in it which doth make it prevail over its opposits, as to love God above all which another hath not, that loveth created things above him, or, it must have its prevalency from what is common to both. Now, this last cannot be said: because so, it were man himself that did make himself to differ: there must therefore be something peculiar in the other, as a cause producing that effect; and if there be a peculiar cause, and some peculiar thing in the one which is not in the other, differing the rise of this from the rise of the other, Then this prevalent act of love which is the effect of that peculiar cause, must beside this degree differ in kind also, as being peculiarly influenced by that cause which the other is not. And seeing this peculiarness is presupposed to preceed the prevalency of the act, It must necessarily follow according to the same grounds, that there must be some positive qualifications concurring for the constituting of the sincerity of Grace beside the prevalent degree thereof, and that therefore sincerity doth not consist alone in it: and so, that hypocrites cannot do the same acts for kind, which the Regenerate may do, without respect to this comparative degree.

To conclude then, we may illustrate all thus, Suppose a dead body were by the power of God made to move, or speak, as once *Balaams* Ass did, there is motion and speech there, suppose it be to the same object, and in the same words; yet doth it differ from the motion and speech of a living man that acteth according to reason. 1. A dead man is moved only from some extrinsick power without the interveening principle of life from within: although he may be moved more speedily and swiftly toward a certain object, than one that from an inward principle of life acts himself; yet doth the motion of the living man, differ in kind (beside any comparative degree which can be in the act of moving) by a positive concurring of an inward principle of life and a locomotive faculty whereby he is immediately acted: So, natural men being dead in sins, what ever acts are produced by them, are merely produced by the common work of Gods spirit from without, without the interveening of any spiritual principle influencing these acts, whereas the acts of a renewed man are indeed performed by the power of Gods special grace; but (*mediantibus habitibus*) by the interveening of infused habits, whereby he not only is acted, but acts himself in the bringing forth of these. As, 1. A tree in the Spring-time, doth send forth her buds, from the native season of the year its having influence thereupon; yet also by the quickning of that natural sap and moistness wherewith it is furnished within it self. 2. A dead man hath no end before him in his motions or actings, as a living man habitually hath concurring in his act: so an unrenewed man hath no pure spiritual end in the best acts, which the gracious man hath; the one eating, drinking, living, and bringing forth fruit to himself,

*Hof.* 10. 1. *Zech.* 7. 3, 6. and the other living, and thenceforth bringing forth fruits to God, 2 *Cor.* 5. 16. Hence, men in nature are said to serve sin, and men in grace to become servants to God, *Rom.* 6. in respect of their design in the same acts. 3. Dead men, as they have no end before them, so have they no reasonable motive, as a living man is supposed to have in his actings; so natural men have no spiritual motive, supposing it be, in loving of God, it is some carnal selfish-thing that swayeth them: for having no spiritual principle within, as matter to work upon, no spiritual motive can have influence upon them, more than fire can be kindled by any blowing, where no kindling, or combustible matter is: a renewed man as such hath a spiritual motive concurring with, and having influence on, his actings: and so, not only loveth God, because of some external benefit; but he loveth him, as being provoked from that inward principle of the Divine Nature that is in him, and respect to Gods Commands and Goodness, whereby as such he cannot but love Him, and these who bear His image, and what is spiritually good: even as a natural Parent, or Son, cannot but love his own Child, or Father, and that from another special principle than they love any other Child or Parent; so also he hath a pure spiritual motive, warming this principle, and kindling the sympathy: and thus he is swayed to love God, because of some spiritual good, as the subduing of sin, the conforming of him to Gods Image, the manifesting of Himself to him, and such like: And he loves Gods People, because he taketh them to be beloved of God, or to love Him, or be like Him, as suppose a Woman did carry affection to a man, it may be from some carnal principle, as his furnishing of her in her vanity, and his being subservient to the lust of vanity, pride, &c. in her; yet afterward, being married with him, might love him because he were her husband, and had condescended to marry her, although he should not serve her vain humour as formerly: in this respect, her love doth differ from what it was, as having a conjugal motive added to it, which it had not formerly. 4. A living man, in his actings, is swayed to them as good, and as good to him; and it is impossible for him to will any thing even though it be good, but as it is considered as such by him; yea, even things that are hurtful are in his desiring of them considered under this notion as good to him; but there is no such thing in the motion of a dead man: so a renewed man, not only acteth on that which is spiritually good; suppose in the loving of God or His People; but also he is swayed therein, and acteth therein upon this formal consideration as it is such, that is, he loveth God as He is good in Himself, and to Him in what is spiritually good; and others as they are such as have title to him, that is, *Mat.* 10. *To love them in the name of righteous men*, that is, upon that formal consideration as such, to love them. And this is that wherein mainly Godly sincerity and singleness doth kythe, when we are not only moved to do what is good, and that from a spiritual motive upon the matter good; but are swayed to that thing, by this motive, as they are such, and so considered by us: and thus, this *as* doth not only respect the object, as is conceived by the understanding to be such; but it doth respect the act, as it is inclined to, undertaken and performed by the will, to wit, it willeth it as such: although the act it self be not in respect of its degree every way adequate to such an object, that is, though God get not so much of the heart as it becometh him to have; yet the heart, considering Him as such a God who deserveth the heart, and ought to have no competitor with him, and as sufficiently able of Himself to make it happy, doth so will Him; and upon that account, doth love Him and delight in Him, although it be exceedingly defective in the degree of both, and they be but conceived as such, to have a being. Now as a man is to try the truth of his life, not only because he moveth and speaketh, but because he moveth and speaketh so, in respect of the kind formerly

formerly mentioned; So a renewed man, is not simply to try his new life from his acts, but as they are so qualified, as is said.

If it be objected, *That hitherto this seemeth to admit no motive that concerneth our selves, as suppose one loved God, for being good to him; or, heaven, because they expected to be happy in it? and that as if no motive could be admitted in loving God but for himself; or, how may this motive be differenced in the love of a natural man, from one that is renewed?*

Answer. There is no such thing as the first intended: it will onely say this, that as the natural man is swayed in the pursuing of moral good, as it is so considered by him; so a renewed man doth that which is spiritually good, and that as it's considered as such by him. Hence there is this difference, that a natural man in his considering any act, which in it self is spiritually good, and materially agreeable to the Law; yet in his yielding to perform it, he doth still consider it as a natural good, or moral at the best; as suppose in loving of God, he is considered by such, as good to them, on a natural, or (as to them) a sinful account, as he loveth God, because He hath gotten temporal peace, deliverance from bodily hazards, an easy or honourable life; it may be, because in providence He hath prospered him in some sinful course, this the learned fore-mentioned Author, pag. 203. doth justly call *one of the greatest of all sins, when the holy God is made a pander and servant to our flesh*: and no question, many do love God upon such an account; or, if they love God for the hope they have of being brought to heaven by Him (which is one of their highest motives) it is because they hope to get heaven from him, and access to their sinful lusts here also; thereby supposing, because of His goodness and mercy, that they may sin, and serve their lusts, and expect even heaven also afterward: or, they love Him under the hope of heaven; nor because there they do expect or desire spiritual or heavenly satisfaction in Himself, in being satisfied with His likeness (which they never delight in here). But because they have a supposed opinion of a greater degree of that same happiness, which now they hunt for: and so heaven is never considered by them as a spiritual good: or, they may love God, as supposing Him to love and esteem of them, because of some loveliness and excellency that is in themselves: and upon that ground expect, even heaven from Him, and love Him, because He so esteemeth of them: and this is to think God like themselves, and not to love Him upon any spiritual account, as is said.

Again, The renewed man as such, is swayed by spiritual motives in these things, that are but naturally and morally good, and under a spiritual consideration He acteth on them, to wit, as they are commanded of God, tend to His honour, and are useful to help one in the worshipping of Him, and so forth: and thus He may be acted even in Eating and Drinking, and things that are spiritually good in themselves, as the loving of God, studying of holiness, &c. He acteth in them as such, that is, he loveth God, because He is an infinite spiritual good in Himself, and because he hopeth to be made blessed and happy in Him: thus, to love God, and desire union and communion with Him, that we may not simply be happy, but happy and blessed in the enjoying of Him, and in being made conform to Him, is no carnal, sinful or mercenary love: because, this the Lord Himself doth warrant: and it supposeth a spiritual principle, withdrawing one from common satisfactions and delights; and it loveth God as God, because thus God is considered as the chief good, sufficiently and onely able to make happy in Himself: and therefore He is desired, because no other thing is accounted sufficient or meet for happiness, but he. And so, love to God for himself, and love to Him because we expect to be happy in Him, or have already gotten spiritual good, such as Regeneration, Sanctification, Repentance, &c. from Him, are no way inconsistent together: and therefore, when we speak

of loving God for Himself, it is not to exclude all respect to our selves, and our own good in Him; but it excludeth all carnal respect to our selves, or respect to our selves as carnal, and delighted with things that are such; and to shew that the good which we expect from God, and for which we love Him, is a spiritual and heavenly good, having the enjoying of Himself joyned with it: which doth commend all other good to us; so that it is respect to God, and our enjoying of Him, that doth make these things lovely. And so we love God, because He is good, and because He heareth our Prayers, and because He furnisheth us with what is needful, and so forth: not because any fleshly lust is pleased, or temporal end is gained: but, because He confirmeth our faith or spiritual joy in Him: which many that have the same things which we have obtained from Him, and are also carnally chearful in the use of them; yet, are not joyful upon this account, but are delighted in the things themselves, or what pleaseth their natures in them, but not in God Himself, and so in other things.

Before we close, it will be of concernment for the understanding of all this Question, to take up rightly the true difference between a *moral specifick difference* (which is acknowledged) and a *physical difference*, which is denied. This physical difference doth flow from some positive qualifications concurring in the act it self, which are not in another act, that hath other, or contrary qualifications in the place of these: again, a *moral difference*, as it's expressed, doth not consider the act with respect to any positive qualifications in it self; but, in respect of some extrinsick consideration; as a pound of gold, and an ounce of gold, are of the same kind in respect of their qualifications physically; yet, suppose one had hired a servant for a pound, or had conditioned so much for the rent of some Lands by a subscribed Contract and Covenant; in this respect, the pound would differ from the ounce morally: because the pound, by vertue of such Covenants, would become the servants hire, and the Land-lords rent, which the ounce would not be. This is a moral difference, and floweth from the bargain, wherein it was conditioned that so much, and no less, should be accounted so; so saith the fore-named learned Author, that this moral difference of Grace, doth flow from the consideration of the Covenant, whereby onely it can be determined what is saving Grace, according to the tenor thereof, whereby Justification or Salvation are bestowed upon any act, pag. 205. And therefore, *Grace, that is thus comparatively prevalent in degree, is to be accounted true saving Grace: because, by the Covenant of Grace that is called for, and onely accepted as the condition thereof, pag. 226. where also he doth say, That the sincerity of Grace doth lye in the degree, not formally, but materially only: because the form of these gracious acts, consisteth in their being the condition on which Salvation is promised.* Where, 1. To forbear the Authors esteeming of all Graces equally; and gracious acts indifferently to be the condition of the Covenant, (which yet necessarily this opinion doth presuppose, and so is the more to be adverted unto) There are two things to be observed, wherein the mistake lyeth here. 1. That it accounteth nothing to be saving, or an evidence of what is saving, but what is called for, or accepted by the Covenant as the condition thereof, whereas any thing that consequently will prove one to be renewed, will also prove him to be justified; although it be not that to which his Justification is covenanted; but is something that doth necessarily presuppose it, and follow after in a justified person, and can be in no other else: for, if an act, so and so qualified, will prove one to have the habits of Grace, without which he could not produce it; Then must they prove him to be renewed, and so to be justified: because, these acts are holy acts, and fruits of the Spirit, as they are called, Gal. 5. and motions of the Inner-man; Rom. 7. and fruits of a good tree: and therefore, must prove that the tree is good. 2. There is a mistake



mistake in this, that it supponeth the Covenant not to accept of Graces (whether as the condition or otherwise) suppose of *love, faith, &c.* but at such a comparative degree onely; and not simply to accept of them as sincere, although not as fully perfect. As suppose one by Covenant had farmed some portion of Land, that doth for the time bear nothing but brambles; upon this condition that he should have returned to him so many wine grapes, bigger than the brambles that grow thereon; in this respect, one that really gave grapes, could not expect to have these accepted, as being the covenanted fruit of the vineyard, or the rent of his lease, if they were not bigger than the brambles which formerly did, or doth continue to grow therein: whereas the tenor of the Covenant in the condition that it proponeth, and in its acceptation of Grace (to speak so) doth ever propose and accept these Graces, simply considered as such, that is, it accepteth of Faith: and the Believer is to be accounted a Believer, and in Covenant, not only because of the degree of his Faith in Christ; but because he, considering Him as the Saviour of sinners, and as sent of God for that end, is drawn out of respect to the faithfulness of God in His Word, to receive Christ, as He is offered to him; and upon that account, according to the terms of the Covenant, to submit to His righteousness, and rest on Him for attaining of Salvation. Likewise in Repentance, Pardon and Justification are not knit to any degree of sorrow (as was formerly hinted) that is, that God will account him a penitent, whose sorrow for sin doth exceed his delight in it; but unto true Repentance, which is for its qualifications such, is the promise made, *who-soever repents, &c.* And in this respect, Gods Covenant runneth not, that He will have grapes bigger than brambles, or gold of more weight than the person himself; but, if they be true grapes, growing upon a good tree, and not grapes of Sodom, or brambles, He doth accept of them, and faith, destroy not, for there is a blessing in it, though it be like unto the smallest berry upon the uppermost tops of the boughs, and although still He call for perfection in the degree of all as the Covenanters duty. And if it be gold, and may abide the touch-stone and fire, and not be consumed, He rejects it not, of what ever weight it be in the scales, as 1 Cor. 3. 13, 14, and 15. is clear. Now gold abideth the fire, not as it is in quantity but as it is in kind, and for the quality upright: and no place is there which doth express Gods way of tryal more plainly; and it hath the promise to the man whose work in any degree will abide the fire, though the dross that is with it (which shall be consumed) be in the quantity far beyond what is solid. Hence we will find in Scripture, that such expressions are used as do ever lay the weight of the sincerity of mens acts, and place the difference of gracious and sinful acts in the kind thereof, as accounting all of such a kind to be gracious, without such respect to its degree, as when it is said, *a tree is known by its fruit, Matt. 7.* the meaning is not, that it is known by fruit of such a bigness, but by their kind; so it's not every tree, that bringeth not forth fruit at such a degree, but that bringeth not forth good fruit; that is, of such a kind; that is, *hewen down, Matt. 3.* A vine is known to be a vine, by its grapes of the smallest bigness; yea, even by its blossoms. Hence so frequently in the Song, the Lords trees are differenced by their buddings, and blossomings, and most tender grapes, or first buds: which could not be, if it were not the kind of fruit that evidenced the difference of trees: for, *men gather not grapes (even of the smallest bigness) from thorns, nor figs from brambles.* So all true Believers, are said to have the same spirit of faith, 2 Cor. 4. 13. and the like precious faith, 2 Pet. 1. 2. Which doth hold forth this, that as all Believers, who have faith, have the same for kind, though not for degree precious; so also, all these who partake of that faith, that is true for its kind, must also necessarily be Believers, and in Covenant with God, of what ever degree it be, if it be the same

for its qualifications and kind with the former, it is precious; otherwise, even Believers have not the like faith in degree: the likeness then and preciousness thereof, must be in the kind, which no hypocrite can have, and it cannot but be accepted by God; so true Repentance, and worldly sorrow, are differenced, 2 Cor. 7. not in respect of any degree, but in respect of the kind; and the one is worldly, and the other is sorrow (v. 9.) after a Godly manner, and (v. 11.) after a Godly sort: which must be because of positive qualifications concurring in it, which the other hath not. And the instances that are brought to prove their sorrowing after a Godly manner, in the words following, do confirm this, to wit, their *carefulness, zeal, &c.* So, 1 Pet. 1. 22. there is *unfained love*; and else where *unfained faith*, which are differenced from counterfeits in hypocrites, as that which hath reality, is from that which is only in appearance. For although they may have really Historical faith, and a kind of natural love to God (to let these go, as supposed) yet, can they never have justifying faith, or real spiritual love, or of that kind: otherwise, it were not *fained*, and could not but be accepted, seeing what is *unfained* is ever accepted. Now, love and faith, cannot be called *fained* simply in these who have truly the same kind of acts of love and faith, or yet true acts of some kind: they must therefore be in this respect *fained*, that though they be in their own kind, true acts of Historical faith, and common love; yet in this they are *fained*, that they seem to be of another kind than they are of, to wit, saving and gracious: and therefore common acts in an unrenewed man, and saving acts in him that is renewed, must differ in kind, as that which hath reality and such a being, doth differ from its counterfeit, and that which is but in shew.

The same might be followed in all such Scriptures, where some practices are differenced from other in respect of positive concurring qualifications, as to do with a *perfect heart*, is frequently in the History of the Kings, to walk with *Godly simplicity*, and *sincerity*, and that *as in the sight of God*, 2 Cor. 1. 13. and 2. 17. to have *real qualified according to knowledge*, and so forth, and almost ever when a gracious act is described: yea, we will find it even in outward duties, suppose in the duty of Praying, or Preaching: that is acceptable Prayer to God, which is Praying in the Spirit, in the Name of Christ, and so forth: otherways the Gift of Prayer may be, where the Grace thereof is not, and no intensness of the exercise of the common gift can make it, without these qualifications, to be acceptable, &c. whereas the least sigh or groan rightly qualified, and arising from the right root, cannot but be acceptable.

To come then to say a word to the third thing proposed, to wit, that this inquiring for the truth of Grace, in its kind, and not in its degree onely and simply, but at least in its degree and kind together, is no way prejudicial but helpful to the exact and safe search of our selves. This seemeth to be the reason that moveth that learned Author (who is an eminent batterer down of presumption, and a presser of holiness) to place the sincerity of Grace in this comparative degree, that thereby presumptuous hypocrites be not strengthened in their self delusions, who may abuse this maxime, which saith, *that the truth of Grace lyeth in the kind and not in the degree thereof*: for, readily do they think they are assured they love God, and believe Him truly, &c. But there is no ground for fear of that here.

Therefore, 1. We say, that this degree being well understood and expressed, is indeed necessarily knit with saving Grace; so that if any man deliberately and habitually prefer the interest of flesh, or any carnal respect to the interest of God and His way, or love any thing more than God, or equally with Him; that man can never warrantably conclude that he hath saving Grace; this being inconsistent with it; and also one who loveth

loveth God sincerely, cannot when he acteth deliberately, and according to the former qualifications; but love him beyond all, because that is the nature of sincere love.

And, 2. We do not seclude this, but add the former qualifications of the kind thereof; and therefore this way must be both more convincing to discover a hypocrite, when he must not only look to the degree but to the kind also: and on the other side, be more satisfying to the poor Believer, when he hath not only his mark to gather from the degree, which often may be exceeding dark and doubtful to him, when he considereth many Idols that may have great place in himself, and how far hypocrites may come in that respect; but when he may also reflect within himself upon his end, motive and manner of acting, &c. he may be helped to discern the sincerity and honesty of his own act and purpose, and have the help of his conscience testimony in reference to these also; and so come more confidently to conclude concerning himself.

It is true, it is a most hard task (though a most necessary task) to discover the nature of sincerity and saving Grace for the comfort of a tender Believer, so as presumptuous hypocrites may not justly stumble thereon to their own ruine; yet, are they, to wit, hypocrites, more apt to flatter themselves in the truth of their Grace, suppose of faith, love, &c. in respect of the kind thereof, than in respect of the comparative degree thereof. And are they not as confident and persuaded of this, that they love God above all, and trust and listen to Him more than to any other thing for attaining to life? And will be ready to say, there is no other thing they can listen to; and in this they are fixed so, as none shall be able to convince them of the contrary, because Gods sovereignty in that respect, is so naturally fixed in the conscience, that they never debate it, but think themselves through in it, the conviction of its reasonableness is so strong on their judgements. And indeed upon what hath been said, if we will separate the degree from the kind and qualifications formerly mentioned, they will have much seeming reason for them: and yet even then, they will bewray that love, faith, &c. which they esteem to be in this degree, to be unsound in its kind, as being but the fruit of nature, and somewhat (readily) which is of age equal to themselves, &c. and therefore cannot be sound. Therefore we add, that this way will be more useful to convince natural men, than the other is: because generally, they are persuaded of the truth and reality of their grace: and to say that their grace were but defective in its degree, would, 1. keep them from the through conviction of their gracelessness, and the right up-taking of their deceitful nature; which yet is mainly and principally necessary to the work of conversion. For it would make them suppose that they had already attained some beginnings, whereas this placing of the sincerity of true Grace in the kind, doth at the first, point out to them the necessity of a change, and more easily discovereth the unsoundness of every thing that groweth from the natural root of an unrenewed condition. 2. This placing of it in the degree, doth put hypocrites onely to amend or quicken their pace, and to be adding to their building; but not to take a new way, or to lay a new foundation: now this exceedingly suits with a presumptuous hypocrites humour, who easily will grant that their faith is weak, but not that it is unsound, and are ever desirous to encrease what they have, which will prove but a building upon sand: and if this were the alone mark of tryal, whether God had the chief room by this comparative degree in their acts, they would be exceedingly confirmed in their opinion that all is well. It's like when Nicodemus came to our Lord, he would not easily have been convinced that he loved or trusted any thing more than God: neither doth our Lord take that way for convincing of him; but doth shew the unsoundness of what he had, in respect of the kind thereof, and that the Tree behoved to be made good and of another kind, before any fruit thereof could be approvable: and there-

fore He preacheth to him the Doctrine of Regeneration, and the necessity of being born again, and doth not insist to shew any defect of degree, but of kind, as in that, Job. 3. is clear, that, saith He, which is born of the flesh, is flesh, that is, what ever fruits may be in a natural man, they are of a corrupt kind as the root is: whereby He would obviate a secret objection that Nicodemus, or a formal hypocrite, might have from the degree or abundance of seeming good acts of zeal, love, prayer, &c. (as may by Nicodemus his words to Christ be gathered to have been in him) be it so, saith He, let there be many fruits, and that in a great degree, that is not the thing that maketh them acceptable: for, they are still but flesh, that is, of a corrupt kind: and thus He rejecteth them all at once, and stoppeth his Mouth without comparing them in reference to their objects, wherein Nicodemus had not been so easily convinced. And on the contrary, saith the Lord, what is born of the spirit, is spirit: whereby He doth not only shew, that there must be fruits of another kind, to wit, spiritual; and that nothing of whatsoever degree can be accounted sincere, except it proceed from this principle, to wit, the Spirit: but also it sheweth that there is nothing which doth come from that principle, if it were but the least motion, but it is spirit, and acceptable according to the root that it cometh from, without consideration of the degree thereof. And seeing our Lord took that way, to discover and convince, it cannot but be safest. 3. This way also would be dangerous to many poor tender Believers, if they were put to try the sincerity of their Grace by this prevalent degree alone: for, do not they often find their unbelief or leaning to creatures (at least in their senie) to exceed their faith in God? And do not they find love to things of the World more frequently carry the heart to delight therein, than in God alone? And shall they cast all as unsound in such a case? What had Paul done if he had walked by this mark, when the motions of sin captivated him, Rom. 7. and yet is he still comforted in the sincerity of His Grace, and in the actings of the inner-man: which cannot be grounded upon this comparative degree; but upon the kind thereof. Now, if this maxime were true, these things would follow it; 1. He could have no evidence of his sincerity, except he had more grace (and that still in exercise) nor corruption, and that to his sense: for, every grace hath some opposite corruption: and if it were not prevalent over its opposite corruption, then could he not conclude that he were gracious, and so not except he were more gracious than corrupt. 2. If any grace were prevailed over by its opposite corruption, he could not conclude that he were in a gracious estate: because this is certain, that where one grace is sincere, there all graces are, they being all members and parts of the new creature, which in Regeneration is brought forth; and it being certain also, that for a time, some graces will be exceedingly prevailed over by their opposites, more than others, as the fear of men will keep a Believer under in a particular more than the fear of God, Then it will follow that either he hath true fear of God at the same time; and so the sincerity of this grace of fear doth not consist in the prevalent degree thereof, or, hath no grace sincere at all, because where one is unsound, all is unsound, & contra; or, one grace must be sound and another unsound, which cannot be said simply, upon the ground formerly given. The Believer then, in such a case, must either conclude himself to be unsound; or, he must try it by some other mark from the kind thereof. And though a Believer ought to account himself greatly faulty, when any one corruption prevailleth; yet it will not follow that he should reckon all to be unsound, which this would infer, and so contradicteth the Saints practices in such cases.

From all this we conclude, that it's more safe to keep both the common doctrine and expressions: and although we have been longer upon this than possibly may be thought suitable to our purpose; yet we have adventured upon it, if so be



It may conduce any thing to the clearing of that wherein the trial of mens states is so much concerned; or, it may occasion some more unanimous expressing of this matter, by others who may more dextrously perform it, that so this be not stated as a new controversy in the Church, at such a time when she is almost overwhelmed with intestine debates already. For we are sure in the general, that these qualifications formerly mentioned, of the end, motive, reduplication, &c. are necessary to the constituting of any act to be sincere, as hath been said. And if they be necessary, they must either be comprehended under the expression of this prevailing degree of the act, and so it is but (*λογωμαχία*) a striving for words, which are not to be contended for. And so both these are upon the matter one. Or, if they be not comprehended under that expression, then they must be somewhat different from it; and so there must be more requisite to constitute the sincerity of grace, and to difference

it from common works in hypocrites, than this degree foresaid. Or, we must say, that these qualifications must be accounted common to the acts of hypocrites, and these that are renewed: which is a thing that we cannot admit, upon the grounds formerly laid down: although we still acknowledge that the pressing at the most eminent degree of grace, even in that comparative respect is exceeding necessary, and useful for attaining to the clear discerning of the sincerity of grace: for, often Believers do make their own search exceedingly difficult, because of the want of this. And the agitation of this question, being somewhat new, we hope what is said will be the more favourably constructed: especially this being our fear, that by such expressions, or assertions, as this opinion hath with it, grace may come to be looked on as too common a thing, and it and nature, to be thought more sib than indeed they are.

## LECTURE IV.

Verf. 8. *And unto the Angel of the Church in Smyrna, write, These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive.*

9. *I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.*

10. *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation ten dayes: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

11. *He that bath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches, He that overcometh, shall not be hurt of the second death.*

**T**He second Epistle, is directed to the Church of Smyrna: and as her case doth differ from the case of Ephesus, and that both in respect of suffering and integrity; so doth the Lords message to her differ, and is wholly comfortable.

There is no charge against this Church, as in many of the rest: this doth not imply an universal freedom from guiltiness of all sorts: But, first, that this Church hath been free of of gross evils, and hath been in honest simplicity aiming at their duty. And secondly, it beareth out the Lords tenderness in passing over many infirmities in an honest Church where there is much suffering.

It is not our purpose to insist in these Epistles (the matter being clear, and ye having good opportunity of hearing them more fully opened) we shall only give a view of the scope, to keep the coherence of the whole Book.

The Epistle hath the division common with all the rest, in those three general parts, to wit, first, a Preface or Inscription, comprehending the Person from whom, and to whom, this message is directed. The Titles given to Christ, the Sender, were spoken to, chap. 1. they are two, 1. He is the *first and the last*: this setteth out the eternity of His God head, or his eternity as he is God. 2. He is stiled, *He that was dead, and is alive*: this setteth out his Office with the efficacy of his death, and the victory that he had obtained by overcoming death, and the devil; and being now above death and suffering, to live God and Man in one person for ever. These titles are specially chosen here for the consolation of this suffering honest Church: for, His suffering and dying commendeth him as pitiful and compassionate; and his God-head and Victory, setteth him out as sufficiently able: both which being put to-

gether, do exceedingly comfort his people, who cannot but live, seeing he liveth, and cannot but continue so for ever, Psal. 18. 46. Joh. 14. 19.

Secondly, The body of the Epistle, is contained, verf. 9, 10, 11. it especially runneth on these two, 1. To hold out Smyrna her case, and that both in respect of what was present, verf. 9. and also in respect of what was to come, verf. 10. 2. It holdeth out the consolations which are allowed to her for her encouragement in reference to both, and these two are intermixed.

Her present case hath two things in it. 1. Her outward afflictions are mentioned. 2. Her honesty and integrity under them, is taken notice of, and approved by Jesus Christ. And this last, is a main ground of consolation against the first.

Her outward afflicted condition, is expressed in these three words. 1. They were under tribulation, that is, sad and greatly straitning pressures, as the word signifieth, and by this may be understood the afflictions of body, name, and estate, and the sad consequents following thereupon, which the Godly are put to by the persecution of wicked men. The 2. word is, *poverty*; *I know thy poverty*: we take it literally to be understood of such pinches and straits in their outward estates, as plundering, sequestration, finings, and other means of that kind use to bring upon men: unto this sort of affliction the Christians in the primitive persecutions were exceedingly liable: who yet joyfully suffered the spoiling of their goods, Heb. 10. 34. This is indeed no little part of trial, when parents and children are casten loose of all temporal things, and have not for the refreshing of themselves & their families. The 3. part of their affliction, is, the reproach of wicked men that wanted not altogether profession; *I know* (saith the Lord) *the blasphemy*

of these which say they are Jews, and are not, but are of the synagogue of Satan. Amongst all the Saints crosses, there are none more bitter than cruel mockings, as they are called, *Hib. 11. 36.* and mockings from Jews that pretended to Worship the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, would be more heavy than the reproaches of Heathens: there were none also more bitter revilers of the Son of God and of His followers, than these hardened Jews; who having Synagogues in considerable Cities, did ever with all their might joyn themselves to reproach and persecute the Christians. It is like that they had a synagogue in this place, pretending to worship God according to the manner of His Law; but because of their obstinate maliciousness, they are by the Lord denied to be Jews; and are said to lie, and to be of the synagogue of Satan: because indeed they looked liker a combination for the devil, than a Congregation for worshipping of God, who slew the Lord, forbade to speak in His Name, and did persecute His Ministers and People, as the word is, *1 Thess. 2. 14, 15.*

From which we may see, 1. That the most honest and tender, may be liable to most sharp afflictions. 2. That often rods and crosses of several kinds are joyned together. 3. That reproach is not the least part of affliction of the people of God; and the shame thereof, being well endured, will be accounted honest suffering of a cross, as if it were a bodily affliction. 4. There is no person more bitter and invective against those that are sincere, than such as have had some engagements to God by profession, and have fallen from the same. 5. Pretended friends (as these Jews were) may come to be most gross enemies, which is both their sin and their plague: therefore, *1 Thess. 2. 16.* It is said, *that wrath was come upon them to the uttermost.* 6. Gods people may look to be met with, and entertained by men, as the Lord Jesus useth to be: if He be well entertained, so will it be with them; if He be despised, as He was by these Jews, let them look to be blasphemed and despised also: for, it is enough to the servant that he be like his Master.

The consolation that is proposed against the foresaid affliction, is two wayes set down, 1. More generally, *I know thy works*: which doth not only relate to His Omniscience, as is usual in these Epistles; but here it taketh in His approbation, as the word after cleareth. Also it is opposed to His taking notice of their enemies malice, *I know the blasphemy of them that call themselves Jews, &c.* Therefore, His knowing of their works, must include His respect to their honesty, as His knowing of their blasphemy pointeth out His detestation of the same. It is no little part of Believers consolation in any strait, that the Lord Jesus knoweth how it is with them, and can bear testimony to their integrity, when they are even almost overwhelmed with reproaches before men. It is no little encouragement also, that He doth take notice of enemies their malice, as here is observed.

The second way the consolation is expressed, is more direct, by Christs plain testimony in these words, *thou art rich*, that is, what ever men think of thee, as being most despicable, or, what ever thou be in thy own estate, most poor and desolate; yet really, and in my estimation, thou art rich, that is, thou art indeed strong in the grace of God, well furnished with Promises and Priviledges, and abundantly rich in faith and good works, *Jam. 2. 5. 1 Tim. 6. 18.* In which things, true riches do consist. This seemeth to be a strange paradox unto the men of the world, thou art poor, and yet thou art rich; yet often have the Saints found this to be a truth; *as having nothing, and yet possessing all things, 2 Cor. 6. 10.* And if this were believed, it might allay the fervour that men have in pursuing after temporal riches: for, the having of them cannot make them rich, (the greatest men in Smyrna get not this testimony from our Lord Jesus, that they are rich) and the want

of them cannot make them poor: and therefore Smyrna, even in her poverty, is rich. This also would make the heavenly Riches to be esteemed of, if men believed that their life did not consist in the abundance of the things that they enjoy, as it is, *Luk. 12. 15.*

The future case of Smyrna, which is set down, *vers. 10.* is also an afflicted condition; and hath its encouragements suitable thereto, laid down. It is, 1. generally proposed to be suffering, *Fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer.* This Church had been suffering; and though honest, was yet to suffer more.

*Obs. 1.* Sufferings when they begin, oftentimes are not instantly at a close. Yea, 2. The Lord will sometimes exercise these that are most tender, with one cross upon the back of another. 3. He Himself is notwithstanding still tender of them, even when they suffer, as may be gathered from this comfortable message to Smyrna.

2. These sufferings are more particularly described, 1. In the kind of suffering, to wit, *Imprisonment*: this is not so to be understood, as if they were to be tried by no other kind of suffering; but it setteth out a main part of their cross, to wit, that some of them should be cast in Prison, and liberty taken from their persons, which it may be, heretofore they enjoyed. 2. It is described in the principal Agent and Instrument of their suffering, *The devil shall cast some of you into prison.* Heathen Emperours, wicked Governours and Souldiers, were instrumental therein: yet it is ascribed to the devil, as if it were immediately acted by him, for these reasons, 1. To shew what influence the devil hath in the acting of wicked men, so that in effect their deed, is his deed, they are so subservient to him. 2. It is to shew from what author all persecutions do flow, to wit, from the devil, who is a murderer and a liar from the beginning, and father thereof, *Joh. 8. 44.* 3. It is to aggrege the horribleness of this sin of persecution, as being a main piece of the devils business, be instrumental therein who will. 4. It serveth also to comfort and encourage the suffering people to patience and constancy, seeing the devil is their special enemy, they ought therefore not to faint in opposing of him, nor to stumble in being opposed by him.

3. Their suffering is described by a designation of the persons, who were especially thus to suffer, *he shall cast some of you into prison, &c.* By you, we understand especially the Ministers; some whereof, saith the Lord, were to be cast in prison; and yet but some: to shew that He was not altogether to extinguish their light. The reasons why we understand it especially of Ministers, are, 1. Because that doth especially prove a trial to the Church, when her Ministers are set upon. 2. Because the preserving of some of them, is a special comfort against affliction, according to the promise, *Isa. 30. 20, 21.* And were it not to be understood of Ministers, it might have a fulfilling, though they should all be cast in prison. 3. The sensible altering of the number from *thou* in the singular, to *you* in plural number, doth clear that the same party is to be understood by both: and seeing by the first, the Angel, collectively taken, is certainly to be understood; this sheweth that in this last place, such, to wit, Ministers, are also to be understood. This form of changing the number, will be more clear in *vers. 24.*

4. This future affliction, is described in its end, that is, trial; *that ye may be tried*: this is neither the end that the devils or persecuters have before them; but that which the Lord intends, who, by this suffering, minded to discover some infirmities to themselves, and to bring forth the solidity and strength of His grace, to His praise and their comfort before others.

5. It is described in its height, and continuance: its height is *tribulation*, that is, very sore and great pressures; its continuance, is, *ten days*, a definite, for an indefinite time: and



doth set out, 1. That their afflictions in general were determined by the Lord, to a day. 2. That it was not long; it was but for *days*. The saddest affliction of the people of God have an end. Yet, 3. It is for *ten days*: to shew that it was for some continuance, and that the people of God ought not to look for freedom from their crosses in the first, second, or fifth day. Some apply it to the persecution that followed in the days of *Trajan*, for the space of ten years; but we conceive the most general acceptation is safest.

The special encouragements that are expressed, are two: (for, some are implied in the former words) The first, is, *fear none of these things, &c.* This is a general comfort, frequently given by the Lord, *fear not, &c.* *Isa. 41. 42, 43. &c.* And certainly though it be general; yet being spoken out of Christs own mouth, must be very comprehensive and massie. By which we learn, That the Saints consolations flow not from their freedom, or being preserved from crosses, (for, that is not their comfort here) but they flow from Christs being engaged to sustain them under the same, and from His Word, which ought to keep them from anxiety and fainting in the greatest tribulations. The second encouragement, is subjoyned to an exhortation, *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* The Lord subjoyneth the promise to the exhortation, 1. To shew the necessity of stedfastness, even under suffering, seeing without it there is no promise of reward. 2. It is done to mollifie and sweeten the peremptoriness of that exhortation by such a sweet encouraging promise annexed to it. The promise is of *a crown of life*: which looketh to the eternal happiness that Believers are to enjoy after this, as *2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.* It is called *life*: because of the cheerfulness of that condition, where Mortality is swallowed up of life: and the life that is here, is not worthy of that name. And it is *a crown of life*: to shew the dignity and excellency thereof; and also to intimate that it is a prize to be obtained (as Crowns usually were given) after a fight. Also, the Lord saith, *I will give it, if thou be faithful unto death*: to shew, that faithfulness and perseverance therein, is a necessary pre-requisite to the obtaining of this Crown; yet that it hath no meritorious influence to alter the nature and freeness of it, it is still a gift of grace even to those that persevere.

*Observe, 1.* That faithfulness and perseverance in Holiness, are no less necessary than Heaven: for, a man cannot attain the one without the other. 2. What ever pinches a Believer may have, the Crown of Glory ought to make all sweet in the very hope thereof: therefore is it proposed here. 3. It is not every one that have this promise, nor every one that may warrantably apply the same, although most men usually exceed in this, and beguile themselves.

The Conclusion (which is the third part of the Epistle) followeth, *vers. 11.* Wherein there is, 1. The common advertisement to all that *have an ear, to hear*: which sheweth how careful men ought to be in hearing of this Word, even as if particularly it were spoken to them. 2. There is a special promise made to overcomers, *he that overcometh, shall not be hurt of the second death.* The person to whom the promise is made, was formerly spoken of: it is not the man that pleaseth himself, or yieldeth to all sort of tentations, or for a time seemeth to be diligent; but he that fighteth and overcometh. The thing promised, is, to be kepted from the *hurt of the second death*: there is a first death, which is a separation of the Soul from the Body, common to good and bad; there is a second death, which is to be eternally separated from the presence of God and the Lamb, especially at the day of Judgment, to wit, when all the wicked as dogs, forcerers, and liars, shall be cast into the lake, which is the second death, *Rev. 21. 8.* In sum, the promise is, he that overcometh shall be kepted from hell.

From which we may gather, 1. That there is a second death after men are laid in the grave. 2. That this death is most horrible and dreadful. 3. That it is a singular rare and special favour and priviledge to be kepted from that second death. 4. It is implied, that the generality of men, who are slaves to their lusts, and war not against them for Christ, shall be made liable to this second death, and for ever be a prey to the same. 5. It sheweth what is the Believers advantage by Christs moyand and friendship that lives for ever, he shall be freed from this. And lastly, from the scope, we may gather, that if a man may be kepted from the second death and wrath to come, he may the more patiently endure what ever else he may meet with in this world, though it were even the first death it self.

### *Concerning the influence that the devil hath on some wicked mens actions : and how he doth carry on the same.*

**O**ne thing may be further inquired here, to wit, concerning the devils influence on mens actions: for, that this effect is attributed to the devil, (*the devil shall cast some of you into prison*) it holdeth forth a special hand that he hath in acting men to do evil, so that their deed is his. Concerning which, we may in general say, that the devil may have, and often hath great power on men, especially wicked men, in making them subservient to his designs. Thus, he maketh men cast some faithful Ministers in prison here: he reigneth, as having men at his command, in the next Epistle; and leadeth them captive at his will, *2 Tim. 2. 26.* he fighteth with *Michael*, and stirreth up Heresies as well as persecution, *chap. 12.* he deceiveth the Nations, *chap. 20.* And often his power is spoken of in this Prophecie: and it is certain that it is very great, 1. Having effects upon the bodies of men, to carry them from one place to another, as he did to the body of Christ; *Matth. 4.* to afflict them by sickness, pain and sores as he did *Job*: and the Woman (*Luk. 13. 16.*) whom, *being a daughter of Abraham, Satan hath bound, faith Christ, lo, these eighteen years, &c.* 2. Upon the external senses; he can

delude ears, eyes, &c. either by misrepresenting external objects, or by inward disturbing of the faculties and organs, whereby men and women, may, and do often apprehend that they hear, see, &c. such and such things, which indeed they do not. 3. Inwardly he may have influence to disturb the reason, and mar the judgment, as he did in these men whom he possessed, *Mat. 8. v. 28.* He hath influence on the understanding, and so he is said to *blind men*, *2 Cor. 4. 4.* 4. He may work on the memory and affections also, as by stealing away the Word, *Mat. 13. 19.* and also weakening hatred, lust, envy, &c. Yea, some way he may work on the will, and so he is said to put resolutions in the heart, as it is said of *Annas and Saphira*, to lie to the holy Ghost, *Act. 5. 3.* and of *Judas*, to betray Christ, *Joh. 13. 27.* So, *1 Chr. 21.* being compared with, *2 Sam. 24. 1.* it is said, that he, that is Satan, did move and provoke David to number the people. All which in the effects, are clear: therefore is he said both to reign in some at his pleasure, and to deceive or delude others by wiles and subtilty, *2 Cor. 2. 11.* which are his devices. These are all certain: Although we cannot fully shew how he effectuateth them; yet, this we may say;

First.

First, He hath no absolute independent power to do what he will; but is limited, ordered, and bounded, by the Lord. And, secondly, he hath no infallible, insuperable way of acting by himself on men; but as men through their sin yield unto him, for, he is dependent, *Jab. 1. 7, 8.* and can violent none to sin. Thirdly, he can have no immediate infallible acquaintance with what is in mens hearts: for, that is Gods property. Fourthly, he hath no immediate determining influence on the will of men: so that although he may persuade violently; yet he cannot determine men to follow: that is the Lords prerogative alone, to have hearts in his hand, *Prov. 21. vers. 1.* to turn them whithersoever he will. And therefore, whatsoever way the devil prevaileth, it is but by a mediate way of alluring or deceiving, by making use of means for that end. Fifthly, He can infuse no new corruption, nor can he create any inward species or representations, thereby to tempt: for that is a work of omnipotency: but, he must work upon what is within the person that he acteth upon, for producing of these; yet, being permitted of God, he may use most powerful persuasive means, by his skill and agility to draw men (being now corrupt) intensibly to many gross sins; or, at least, to tempt them. Which temptation meeting with corruption in us, and the Lord justly giving over some to it, Satan may prevail over them by such and such like means, as,

1. He may by signs know mens particular inclinations and predominants (although he reach not to the understanding of the thoughts immediately:) and he may gather what snare may most readily prevail with men for the time, according as evidences may appear in their way, either by their not praying to God, or, by what kythes in words and other carriage, wherein certainly he goeth beyond any man, to wit, in taking up of mens inclinations. 2. He may suit and fit external temptations to their distemper, and tryste them so as there may be access to the venting of such lusts; thus, he maketh Judas his inclination to covetousness and the Pharisees envy, to tryste together; David to behold Bathsheba in such a posture, when he is somewhat secure, &c. 3. He may jumble, confound and put through other the inward frame, by working on what is natural in the humours of the body, for awakening lust, passion, revenge, suspicion, fears, &c. whereby men are some way disposed to yield to the temptation, offered, which he timeth with this. 4. He may cast in representations in the mind of such and such things, diverting the imagination from objects which might mar his design; and so he may order what is within, as out of it, or by it, to form representations in the imagination of such and such things: whereby, proposing them (as it were) objectively to the understanding, he may mediate offer them to the will: and for that end also, for a time keep such thoughts in the mind and in the memory. Thus, often the Saints cannot be free of imaginations (by his abusing of the phantasie) which they hate, and at which they have horror: and therefore, these cannot be thought natively and naturally to arise from themselves, which are so strange and uncouth to them. Thus, some things come unexpectedly, by Satans furnishing the thoughts with a sinful middle for attaining of an end, that is desired, and it may be, is desirable. Thus also he may darken Scripture, offer diverse senses to it, furnish objections against the truth of it, or against the true meaning of it, obstruct their taking up of the weight of any reason against their Errors, &c. as he is said to blind (*2 Cor. 4. vers. 4.*) the minds of them that believe not, &c. and to spew out a flood of error, *Rev. 12. verse 15.* He may not only objectively thus present such a thing; but he may continue to bear it in, and to use motives drawn from seeming reason to engage the will to yield to it, as he did to Adam and Eve at the first: and thus, he stirreth not only natural humours of the body; but natural corruptions, engaging all the lusts, as they may have influence to prevail with the will,

for yielding to these tentations; So Judas his covetousness, is engaged to deal with him to sell his Master: for, the devil though he infuse no covetous humor; yet he may act on what there is, and he stirreth the Pharisees envie to concur and make them accept of that offer. And in this doth lye a main part of the temptation, and the devils wiles and devices, whereby he deceiveth, to wit, in making seeming reasons to have weight, as if there were force in them, and true grounds to be rejected as not for such a time, &c. nor of such weight. Thus he prevailed with Eve; presenting the temptation with its plausible, (though false) reasons: And this way, though indirectly, as the Apostle saith, *2 Corin. 11. 3.* he continueth to deal with Adams successors, to prevail with them as he did with Eve by his subtilty: and thus he leadeth men at his pleasure, by proposing to them what he will: otherwise he could have no such dominion over men in the world as he hath: and thus, many sins are born in on men without any connexion with their natural complexion: and if it were not thus, one man might prevail in some respect more with another (for he can deal by reason with him) than the devil could, if he had no objective influence on them: and the tentations being often unto particular designs, it sheweth, that the devil hath a moral objective way of dealing with men; otherwise it were no more to say that the devil put it in Judas heart to betray his Master, than to say he stirred him up to love money; but this sheweth, that to him who loved money formerly, the devil proposeth this as a fit mean to gain somewhat of it. Also, *Acts 5.* it is said to Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie? &c. so that (as it were) when it was objected within themselves, what if it be asked whether the Lands were sold at so much? the devil furnisheth the answer: say (saith he) it was: and he maketh it probable that none should know it, seeing both man and wife were to agree in their answers: and so he presenteth that to them, by which their covetous and distrustfull humours prevailed with them, and they both yielded, therefore it is also said, *Acts 5. 4.* why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? And *v. 9.* How is it that ye have agreed together? The seed as it were, cometh from the devil who injected it; the conceiving is from our corruption, which entertaineth the motions stirred up by him. And how can it be otherwise said that he blindeth mens eyes that they should not understand the Gospel? for if it were only by a natural stirring of humours, it would distemper them for every thing; but here lieth the temptation, that they are wise in all other things, but in spiritual things, the devil blindeth them, and maketh the Gospel seem foolishness to them. Thus, he setteth on Ahab by enticing him without by his prophets, and swaying him within out of pride; and he prevailed with the false prophets, by stirring them up to lie, and that in reference to that particular design, which no more influence on the body could have done.

By all which we may see, that it is not without good reason said, that the devil goeth about seeking whom he may devour, he is near the heart, and is often upon folks counsel when they are not aware. And this sheweth what need there is of watchfulness, that we give not place to the devil, and that he get not occasion to tempt: for, with much subtilty can he make use of it; and act men in executing of his orders, when they know not what he is doing, as likely it was with these persecutors whom he engaged thus to persecute these Ministers; which way of his, being frequently mentioned in this Book, we have once for all, said this of it.

From this we may also gather, how little weight is to be laid upon the testimony of this devil, whose work it is to suppress the Truth of Christ, and to traduce his Servants: for which cause our Lord and his Apostles, would not suffer him to speak, even when he pretended to confess him; because, he was a liar from the beginning, and the father thereof. It is therefore not unworthy the observing how contrary to our Lords way



way the Jesuites are in this; who to supplie the defect of other testimonies for their way against the *Calvinists*, (as they call them) do carefully and industriously gather and heap up testimonies from the devils mouth, and insult therein as a proof in-controvertible: for this end, *Lorinus*, in *cap. 5. act. v. 16.* having cited some pretended Histories holding forth the little weight the *Lutherans* had with the devil, doth subjoyn this as an infallible confirmation of their compliance with him, *Sed & ex ore energumena Laudunensis tota Gallia, ac toto orbe Christiano celebratissima, Calvinianos demon irridens, nihil sibi ab illis timendum clamabat cunctis audientibus, Anno 1566. quoniam amici essent, & federati, sicut testantur acta, Gallicè summa fide scripta, &c.* It is in sum, this, That the devil out

of the mouth of one that was famous for being possessed by him, did mock the *Calvinists*, crying out, and that openly before all that there was nothing to be feared from them, for they were friends and confederates: and for confirmation of this, he assereth the thing to be with great faithfulness recorded: as if the weight did onely lye in the matter of fact, and that there were no cause to question his faithfulness who gave this testimony. But of this enough: we have reason to thank God, that our faith in the Truths of God, and our clearness of the Errors of their way, are built upon a more sure foundation; and that our controversie with them, is not at the devils decision, from whom indeed the *Calvinists* might expect no favourable sentence. But the Lord is judge Himself, To him be praise for ever.

## LECTURE V.

Ver. 12. *And to the angel of the Church in Pergamos, write, These things saith he, which hath the sharp sword with two edges,*

13. *I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where satans seat is, and thou holdest fast my Name, and hast not denyed my faith, even in those dayes wherein Antipas was my faithful Martyr, who was slain among you, where satan dwelleth.*

14. *But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast therethem that hold the Doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto Idols, and to commit fornication.*

15. *So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.*

16. *Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.*

17. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches, To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden Manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.*

**F**olloweth now the third Epistle, directed by the Lord to the Church of *Pergamos*; the estate of it is implied in the Body of the Epistle to be a suffering condition: and though having much integrity, honesty, and constancy under her sufferings; yet in some things reproveable and defective: especially in her zeal against false Teachers: for which cause, the Lord doth here, though with great tenderness, reprove her.

The division of the Epistle is common with all the rest. The Inscription is in the 12. *vers.* The body of the Epistle, in the 13, 14, 15, 16. *verses.* The Conclusion in the 17. *vers.*

The direction, (which is the first part of the Inscription) is, *To the Angel of the Church of Pergamos*, a famous City in *Asia* the less, sometimes the seat of kings: and for that present time, a seat of the *Roman* Governours: a place full of sin, Idolatry, and cruelty; Yet hath our Lord a Church here, to which He writes, when he taketh no notice of the Governour, or of these who were most eminent: which doth shew, 1. The power and efficacy of the Ordinances of Jesus Christ, in teaching whom he pleaseth, though in the most desperate condition. 2. It sheweth the freeness of grace, that condescends to gather a Church here. 3. It sheweth his tenderness to, and care of those whom he hath gathered to be a Church unto himself, beyond any other in the World.

The first Title he taketh to himself, is, *He who hath the sword with two edges*: the sword with the two edges, is the word

of God, *Ephes. 6. 17. Heb. 4. 12.* which we heard *Chap. 1. v. 16.* did proceed out of Christs mouth. It sheweth, that Christ hath the Command of the Word, to make it effectual for the good of his Elect; and for the convincing, smiting, wounding and slaying of his enemies by spiritual plagues: and it is chosen in this place, because he doth make use of this as his sovereign priviledge in the threatening, for stirring up the angel to his duty.

In the Body of the Epistle (besides the common assertion of Gods Omniscience) we have, first, the commendation of this Angel and Church, *ver. 13.* Secondly the reproof, *ver. 14. 15.* Thirdly, an exhortation to duty, with a sharp threatening added, as a motive to press the same, *ver. 16.*

In the commendation, we have, 1. the thing commended. 2. Some excellent aggravations, (to call them so) or commending qualifications of this commendation. The thing commended, is in two expressions to one purpose, *Thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith*: By name, we understand the Doctrine of the Gospel, whereby Christs Name, that is, himself is held forth and manifested: for, in the Gospel, to preach Christs Name, and to declare it to the *Gentiles*, is all one with preaching himself, or his Gospel. By faith is understood the Doctrine of faith in him, which is the same thing. The holding fast of his Name, is a zealous adhering to the profession of his Truth, as it were, holding it by both hands; and not denying his faith, is an open avowing of the same by a publick

publick profession, and honouring Christ by their avouching of their faith in Him, without fainting, or shifting in the same, notwithstanding of any peril that might follow thereupon. For, this negative, *Not denying his faith*, doth import more than is expressed:

The commendation, is amplified by two special circumstances, that serve to heighten the same, 1. From the place where; And, 2. from the time when; they expresse this constancy. 1. For the place: it is where *Satans throne was*. It is not much to avow a profession in some places; but to do it in such a place as *Pergamos*, where Satan had a seat or throne, (as the word is) is much. Satans having a throne, implyeth not only a sinfulness in that place, common with other places; but it doth insinuate such an open avowed opposition to Christ and His followers, and such an adhering to Satan, that, on the matter, it looked as if Satan had commanded expressly there in chief: for, not only was wickedness tolerated; but carried on, and established by a law: nor only had he a seat in hearts, as he hath in all men by nature; but in the Magistracy and Judicatories, whereby orders were given in publick, in reference to persecution and profanity; and men did so walk, as if directly orders had been given by Satan, and taken from him, in that place: he did so effectually without control (as it were) obtain his will, the Lord so permitting and ordering it in His wise and secret providence and Justice.

From which, 1. We may see how tyrannously the devil would manage every thing, if he had things at his disposal. 2. At what great height he may have his dominion, even beside the Gospel, and in the place where it is. 3. How fully men naturally are slaves to the devil he being the prince of this world, that *worketh in the children of disobedience*, Ephes. 2. 2. And, 4. We may see what need there is to pray that Christs Kingdom may come, and how thankful we ought to be, who are in any measure freed from this tyrannie.

The second circumstance in this commendation, is, the time, that is, it was *even in those dayes wherein Antipas was my faithful Martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth*. This is also an excellent part of the commendation, that it was not only in such a place, that was wicked and profane; but at such a time when wickedness and profanity was exercised in its height, which is proven by the death of a faithful Martyr, who was then violently slain amongst them: at such a time to hold fast His Name, was indeed commendable. Whereby we see how the Lord doth take notice of the commendable circumstances of His peoples duties, as He doth of the aggravations of their sins. What this *Antipas* was, there is no more mentioned in Scripture concerning him: it is recorded in Story that he was a Minister in *Pergamos*, and it is not improbable, seeing these are most ordinarily the object of persecuters malice and violence. However, the Lord putteth three great titles upon him, 1. He is a *Martyr*: this signifieth a witness, and that not only such a witness, as witnesseth by word and profession, but as sealeth it with his blood: thus *Paul* speaketh of *Stephen*, Acts. 22. 20. when the blood of thy Martyr *Stephen* was shed. And therefore in the Primitive times, Martyrs were distinguished from confessors, thus, Martyrs, were such as suffered to death; confessors, were such as suffered imprisonment, mutilation of some member, whippings, or such like, for the faith of Christ. 2. He calls him a *faithful Martyr*: to shew that not only the cause was honest, for which he suffered; but also that he was honest in his suffering for the same. 3. He is my faithful Witness: which setteth forth, 1. The end of *Antipas* suffering, which was to bear witness for Christ. 2. It holdeth forth the Lord owning of him in that testimony, and now by this, as it were, from Heaven writing this kindly and honourable Epitaph upon him, *he is my faithful Martyr*. It may be, he was stoned in some tumult, as a seditious person, or one not worthy to live,

because of some reproaches or other put upon him; yet thus doth the Lord own him, to wipe all these away, and to make his memory to be the more savory; and witness bearing for Christ, to be the lesse feared at; that so others may be animated and encouraged to be followers of Him.

From all which we may gather, 1. That it is exceeding commendable to be zealous, and stedfast in such a place, and at such a time as Religion is hazardous and dangerous. 2. That the death of any of the Lords people, especially when it is in witnessing for Him, is exceeding precious in His sight. 3. That honest witnessing for Christ is a most honourable thing *Antipas* being particularly named with these titles, for setting forth the honourableness of his suffering. 4. We may see also, that there is an implied distinction of Martyrs, some are *faithful*, and, it may be, some dying the same death, and before men for the same cause, may yet not be accounted faithful before the Lord. If it be asked, What is necessary to make one to be accounted a faithful Martyr before God? We suppose these four are necessary, 1. That the person suffer as a well-doer, so it must be for the Truth of Christ, or righteousness sake, *Matth. 5. 10. 11. for, non est mors, sed causa mortis que facit Martyrem*. 2. Not only would suffering be stated upon a particular account, wherein they have the side that is right comparatively; but they would be right simple in the main Truths of Christ, as for instance, sometimes *Arrians* and *Jews*, after Christs coming in the flesh, and other Hereticks, did suffer by Heathens, either because they would not worship their Idols, and disclame the true God; or, because they would not simply deny themselves to be Christians: they had indeed the better, if we look to the Question as stated between them and Heathens; yet they cannot be called *Christs faithful witnesses*, seeing they did not faithfully give testimonie to Him in His Person, Natures, and Offices. 3. It is necessary that the person be, as to his state, a Believer, without which none can be a faithful Martyr, although possibly his testimony may be a faithful testimony: for, *without faith it is impossible to please God*, especially in such a great thing as suffering for Him. 4. It would be gone about in the right manner; so as thereby the testimony given to Christ, may be made the more to shine, to wit, there would be blamelessness in the mans conversation, singleness in his end, denedness, zeal, humility and love kything and in exercise in his undertaking and undergoing those sufferings, as we may see in *Stephen*, Acts 7. 51. &c. And this is to suffer as a Christian, and not as an evil doer, and busy body, 1 Pet. 4. 15. 16. and according to the will of God, by which such may be encouraged to commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well-doing, *Ibid. vers. 19*. This is also confirmed from, 1. *Corinth. 13*.

He doth again repeat *where Satan dwelleth*. 1. To shew that the devils dominion in that place, was not by starts and fits; but but that he had a settled, and (as it were) a constant residence there. 2. To commend their honesty and stedfastness the more. 3. It is to shew the great evidence of the devils dominion, to wit, that faithful men were put to suffering for the cause of Christ.

The reproof followeth, *vers. 14, 15*. First, generally but I have a few things against thee: this is not to be understood as if the faults were little in themselves; But it is thus expressed, 1. To shew how tender He was of them; when (as it were) He heightens their commendation, and extenuates their faults. 2. It is to encourage and hearten them to mend cheerfully that which He reproveth.

Hence Observe, 1. There may be corruption and defects, where there are very many things commendable. 2. Where there is honesty in the main, and a suffering condition for Christ, there He is no rigid or severe censure; but a most tender constructor of His Peoples infirmities.

Secondly, More particularly He setteth down by way of similitude



similitude the ill reprov'd, *vers. 14. Because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, &c.* which He applyeth, *vers. 15.* It is not to be thought that there were any professed followers of Balaam in that Church; but the intent is, to shew, that, upon the matter, the doctrine of the *Nicolaitans* did agree therewith; and if Balaams practice was hateful, theirs must also be such. And so, by proposing the hateful way of Balaam, He discovereth the odiousness of the doctrine of the *Nicolaitans*: which will be found, upon the matter, to be the same. The History of Balaam is recorded, *Numb. 22, 23, 24, and 31. Chap.* In sum this, he was a greedy covetous wretch, who greedily aimed at the wages of unrighteousness; and being restrained from cursing the people of Israel by the Lord, he gave subtle advice to Balak to draw the people of Israel into a snare, that thereby God might be provoked against them; and so, in the close, they might be prevailed over. *Josephus*, in the fourth Book of the Antiquities of the Jews, expresseth it thus, *That he advised Balak to send some of the beautifullest women of Midian to wander about the Camp of Israel*; who, though they should entertain the Israelites familiarly, yet that they should not yeeld any thing to their lust; but that they should pretend to run from them, till they should partake of their Idol-seasts with them: in reference to both which, they prevailed with the Israelites, and drew them both into bodily, and spiritual fornication: which were the two great faults of the *Nicolaitans*, to wit, liberty in fornication, as if it were not sinful; and indifference in eating of things sacrificed to Idols, without respect to offence, as was shewn on *vers. 6.* Therefore the Lord here speaketh of the doctrine of the *Nicolaitans*, as being indeed the reviving of Balaam's old condemned Error: And so they became guilty before God of his practices, as if they had expressly professed the maintaining of the same. It is said, *That Balaam taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, &c.* His wicked advice getteth that name: because, it proved an occasion of falling and stumbling to the Israelites, as if a stumbling block had been cast in the way of some man, to make him fall. Thus many sinful practices have not only the consideration of guiltiness, in respect of the persons themselves, who commit the same; but have also the consideration of offence, as they are apt to prove occasions of falling, and ruine unto others. This also, to wit, *of laying a stumbling block before others*, will agree well in application to the *Nicolaitans*: who, as they were guilty in the sin of uncleanness; so were they careless in reference to offence, not regarding how offensive their way was unto others in the use of indifferent things, such as eating of things sacrificed, &c. which in these primitive times was to many the occasion of stumbling, when Christian liberty was not rightly bounded, as we may gather from, *1 Corinth. 8. 9, 10.* And these two also often go together, to be careless of guilt before God, and of offence before others.

From which we may gather, 1. That the most vile Errors and delusions may increase exceedingly: This of the *Nicolaitans* had spread in *Ephesus*, *Pergamos*, and several other Churches, even in the dayes of *Job. the Apostle.* 2. That new-upstart grosse abominations, are oftentimes indeed but the reviving of some old buried and condemned practices or doctrines. Thus the Error of the *Nicolaitans*, is but indeed, on the matter, the putting of Balaam's practice in a doctrine, and maintaining the same under another name. 3. We may see that it is an allowed way of confuting new start-up delusions, to shew their agreement, on the matter, with former old acknowledged and condemned Heresies. Thus the Lord doth here; and in the Epistle following, he compareth them to *Jezabel*: for, often men will more impartially judge of by-past Errors, than of what seemeth to be new: and therefore the devil useth most cunningly to disguise those things, and to endeavour to have old Errors vented under the notion of new lights, and depths, when indeed they are but old *corruptions*.

If it be said here, That ordinarily the most grosse men use to brand the most Orthodox with this, as being revivers of old Heresies, whereof many instances may be given. For Answer, We say, That a simple asserting of this, is not sufficient to bear it out: we would therefore propose these qualifications, 1. That the thing esteemed to be an Error or Heresie, be indeed incontrovertibly such, and that in some fundamental thing: indeed sometimes, even the Ancients, do put somethings in the Catalogue of Heresies, which will not be found to be of such weight. It is not those we speak of, nor is it such that are mentioned here. 2. The application also would be clear; and men would not charge others with Heresies of an odious name or nature upon prejudice, or upon mistake of some expression: nay, not upon some seeming consequence, which the Authors do deny, and, it may be, others cannot demonstratively shew the inference thereof. Here it is not so, the practice and doctrine of the *Nicolaitans*, is so clear, that they cannot deny it in particulars, though it may be, at first, they would refuse it to be the doctrine of Balaam. 3. Such an application would be made in knowledge, and from thorough acquaintance with the alleged old Heresie upon the one side, and with particular tenents of others, who are supposed to maintain that error, upon the other side. Oftentimes men speak in those things, what they know not, or with a too lightly passing view; or, upon some probable resemblance, or appearance, are ready to ground such an application. 4. This would be remembered, that the old condemned Heresie must be such as is condemned in Scripture, and that still the Word is to be acknowledged as the supream rule. All which agree in this application; and where they agree, it is not a little prejudice to an opinion, to say, it is, on the matter, the same with such and such an old Heresie, that is, to mens conviction long since condemned upon grounds from the Word of God.

This was a foul Error: and it is not to be thought that this Angel, who is here so commended, was guilty of any of these evils, by any positive accession to them; but this is the fault charged upon him, *That thou hast them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans*, that is, the Angel had such in the Church, who continued to be Members, and were not by Discipline cut off. This is his fault: for, It was not the Churches fault that such lived in *Pergamos*, because they had no civil Authority to impede that; yet it was their fault that they lived Church-members there, because they had Church Authority to remedie that, which yet was not put in exercise against them, as by *Ephesus* had been done.

From which we may gather, 1. That the Church is invested with a Power and Authority for cutting off of corrupt Members. 2. That it is a most horrible fault where there is defect in this. Our Lord Jesus quarrelleth the want of this in *Pergamos*, where He commendeth much honestie: and He commendeth it in *Ephesus*, where there wanted not inward defects: because there is nothing that more occasioneth the Name of Christ to be reproached, His Ordinances to be despised, His people to be offended and stumbled, than the suffering of corrupt Members that are tainted with Errors to continue in the Church. Therefore much of the Churches commendations or reproofs in these Epistles is founded on this, as it is rightly, or, partially exercised. 3. By this it appeareth, that our Lord Jesus is no friend to Toleration; and that the tolerating of corrupt Teachers, can no way be approven of Him. It is true, this is directly spoken against Church-men their tolerating of corrupt Teachers; But will any think that that will be approven in civil Powers, which is so hateful in the Church-officers? or, that Jesus Christ will account Toleration in the one to be hateful, and in the other to be approvable? 4. There is diversitie of tempers in Church-officers, and diversitie of conditions in Churches, even where there may be real honestie in both: *Ephesus*.

*Ephesus* had much coldness within, and yet much zeal against those *Nicolaitans*: *Pergamos* again, is much commended for their zeal and constancy in suffering; and yet reproveth for want of zeal against these corrupt Members. 3. Men may be very straight and tender in the work of God, and bold in reference to suffering; and yet faint and be defective in the prosecuting of Church-censures against erroneous men. This appeareth both from this Epistle and that which followeth, where their particular condition and publick carriage in other things, is exceedingly commended; yet is there a notwithstanding in both in reference to this.

If it be asked, *what can be the reason that honest, tender, and zealous men should be so often defective in this, who yet may be zealous and fervent against scandalous practices?*

Ans. These reasons may be given, 1. It is more difficult to get the impression of the odiousness of corrupt doctrine on the heart, than of grosse outward practices: because grosse practices offend nature more directly, and are hateful even to natural men: and even some good men are ready to foster such an opinion, as if grace were more consistent with error than with profanity. Upon this ground the Lord Himself and the Apostles do more frequently give people warning to mark and abstain from them that cause offences contrary to the Doctrine of the Gospel, than they do in matters of grosse practice. 2. Persuading of persons that are erroneous, hath often little fruit with it as to the persons themselves, there being but few that are recovered out that snare of the devil, and to whom God giveth repentance, who once deliberately oppose themselves to the Truth; but on the contrary, they seem to be more bold, and to make a greater stir than if they had not been taken notice of, as we see in *Corinth*, and *Galatia*; the more that *Paul* pressed them, the more they seemed to despise him; and they go on in their contradiction and blasphemy, as in the History of the *Afts*, and instances of *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, is clear. This maketh that even sometimes good men, out of fear of the inconveniences that may follow, and the difficulties that accompany such a work, may be too prone to oversee and forbear them. 3. Sometimes respect to the persons of some who may be carried away, may have influence on this, as suppose some persons for a name of piety, sometimes favorite, should be seduced; preposterous tenderness to those may make men cruelly to spare them to their prejudice. This fault the Lord seemeth to quarrel in *Thyatira*, that they suffered his servants to be seduced. 4. There may be also a design by more gentle means to restrain such an error, and recover such as are fallen, whereby they may come to exceed and turn to be defective in not using the means appointed, as if such censures had been needlessly appointed, or, as if the Lord did not make use of mediate means for the restraining of error. 5. Such businesses also have often their own mistakes among many tender members of the Church; some whereof, may be too favourable constructors of the most grosse seducers, and so fear to offend them; and love to keep all in peace, oftentimes may steal in to have weight to the prejudice of the Lords Ordinance. It is written of the Schism in *Phrygia*, which arose for *Montanus*, that many did construct too well of him, as not thinking it impossible but he might be a good man, who, therefore could not go alongst in the thoughts that others had of him. There is readily something of this amongst the weakest sort where deluders come, which getting way for a time, doth rather increase than diminish; and so leaveth this duty in a greater non-entry than at first.

We come now to the remedy, or duty exhorted to, which is laid down and pressed *vers. 16*. It is in short, *Repent*; that same which was proposed to *Ephesus*, *vers. 5*. The Lord hereby signifying, 1. That when sins are fallen into, it is not enough to forbear them, but there must be an exercising of repentance for them. 2. That there is no expectation to be kept free

from wrath where there hath been sin without repentance. 3. That omissions are sinful and to be repented of, even as commissions are. And, 4. That sinful omissions in a mans publick Station (such as this is, which is reproveth) are to be repented of, as grosse personal faults are.

The threatening annexed, is, in these words, *or else I will come unto thee quickly, and I will fight against them with the sword of my mouth*. It hath two parts: The first, respecteth the Church or Angel of *Pergamos*, *I will come unto thee quickly*, that is if thou repent not, I will one way or another come in judgement against thee. We conceive it relateth to the Angel especially. It being in the singular number: because this fault being a defect in Discipline, is not so to be imputed to the People, as to him whose place it was to take order with such corruptions: which will appear more clearly afterward. The second part respecteth these grosse members that were suffered to be in the Church, to wit, the *Nicolaitans*, *I will fight against them with the sword of my mouth*, that is, seeing ye are guilty of defect here, if there be not repentance for it, I will come in an extraordinary way and my self punish those whom ye have suffered. For clearing of this threatening, we may consider, 1. Wherein it consisteth. 2. How it can be a threatening to the Angel. 3. Wherefore he is so peculiarly threatned.

To the first, It is clear here, that the party immediately threatned, is the *Nicolaitans*, whom the Lord threatneth to fight against with the sword of His mouth: which looketh not to any external, or corporal plague: for, the sword of His mouth, is not the weapon that inflicteth such: But it looketh especially to these; 1. To a discovery of their wickedness, and of the hatefulnesse of their way, by His Word. 2. To a censuring, threatning, and sentencing of them by the same. 3. To a fruitlesse of such discoveries, threatnings and sentences, as to any spiritual or saving work upon them; but that they should be by such clear convictions and sentences, in Gods secret Wisdom and Justice, more hardened, convinced, irritated and affected with spiritual plagues, than if they had not been so dealt with: in this respect often in the Scripture we have mentioned, *hewing by the Prophets, and slaying by the words of the Lords mouth*, as *Hosea 6. 5.* and *fighting with Antichrist*, and *destroying him by the Spirit of His mouth, 2 Thess. 2. 8.* and elsewhere the like expressions to that purpose. This is a sad plague, when the Table of the Gospel becometh a snare, and when through mens own corruption they become more drunk with their own delusions, even under convincing Light; and when the Word of God, which is the only Weapon whereby they may offend their enemies, is through their opposing the Light thereof, turned to fight against them, as they have turned themselves to fight against it: the event here as to them, cannot but be desperate.

For the second, It may be questioned how this can be a threatening to the Church or Angel that the Lord would take such course with these corrupt *Nicolaitans*? It might rather look like a favour to them? Ans. If we consider it more particularly, we will find it a threatening in these respects, 1. That it implies Christ to be angry at their neglecting of their duty; and that this extraordinary way doth insinuate His esteeming of them not to be worthy to have this employment: therefore he taketh their duty off their hand, and provideth Himself of some others for the performing thereof. Thus, when *Paul* is threatening the *Corinthians*, 1 *Epist. Chap. 4. vers. 21. what, shall I come unto you with a rod?* &c. whereby he sheweth himself to be angry. In the beginning of the next Chap. he reproveth them for suffering the incestuous person, and commandeth him to be Excommunicated: which beareth out this, that *Pauls* coming over them to presse such a duty, was a stroke or more for their defect in the same. 2. It is a threatening in this respect: because the taking of some extraordinary way and mean as in reference



reference to these *Nicolaitans*, hath strange-like and uncouth effects oftentimes following upon it: thereby the Church is put through other, and revolutions follow; and often the Wheat is trode upon, when the Tares are a weeding; which cannot but be hurtful to the Church. 3. It supponeth a laying by of this Angel and making use of some other for his work of convincing, reproof, and confounding, &c. of those wicked men, which should be to his disgrace, when he should have no hand in so good a work: and so the meaning of the threatening, is, to the Angel, if thou spare these wicked men, and do not thy duty in reference to them, I my self will come in another way, and lay thee by, and follow my purpose in sentencing, and censuring of them by some other mean. And this is to give another his Crown, which is so oft commended to the Angels in those Epistles to be kept. Thus the threatening is not to remove a Ministry or Church-estate from *Pergamos* as was in the case of *Ephesus*; but it is the Lords threatening to lay aside such particular Ministers, and notwithstanding thereof to carry on his work.

Now, for the third, to wit, wherefore this threatening respecteth the Angel more peculiarly, than that of *Ephesus*, did. *Ans.* The reason was formerly hinted, to wit, *Ephesus* sin and defect was in the practice of the power of godliness, common to Ministers and people: therefore doth that threatening extend almost equally to both: this sin again, which is reprov'd here, doth peculiarly reflect upon the Ministers: and therefore the weight of the threatening doth peculiarly respect them.

From which we may learn, 1. That fainting and unfaithfulness in the Work of the Ministry, may procure an interruption by one mean or other in the exercise thereof, or a blasting of a man in Gifts and Parts, who sometimes hath been useful. 2. It sheweth that sometimes God may keep his Word in a place, and exercise it in reference to some persons between whom and Him there is a standing or stated fight, they fighting against him and not receiving the love of the Truth, and He fighting against them by giving them up to hardness of heart and strong delusions; and, in his secret and holy Justice, making his Word and Ordinances to promote the same. 3. It followeth also, that it is a most dreadful thing when the Lord and his Word become our party, and when he fighteth against a people with that Sword: it is here a more terrible threatening to fight against those with the Sword of his mouth, than if he had sent the Sword, Famine, or Pestilence upon them. 4. It implieth, that this a plague, and a way of punishing, that the Lord in His Justice often sendeth and exerceth upon deluders and corrupt Teachers, who have not received the love of the Truth, and have perverted the Word of God to their own destruction, to wit, that it should be a weapon of Gods indignation for the inflicting of Spiritual plagues upon them.

The Conclusion followeth, *ver. 17.* and hath two parts common with the rest; 1. All that are spiritually affected, and have the sense of right-hearing, are exhorted to *hear what God saith by his Spirit to the Churches*, as if particularly it were spoken to them. This is so far from supposing that men naturally have ears to hear, that it doth imply the contrary, to wit, that it is not every one that hath ears to hear, but that he is a rare man that hath them; for, none can hear spiritually what the Lord saith to the Churches, but such as have gotten them as *Moses* word is, *Deut. 29. 4.*

The second part of the Conclusion containeth some encouragements to the wrestling Believer, as all the rest of the Conclusions do. The party to whom the promise is made, is the same, to wit, *him that evercometh*, or he that is a overcoming, as it may be read: which pointeth at the zealous, single, constant, and faithful Wrestler, though he hath not yet obtained the victory. The encouragements given him, are, on the

matter, the same with the rest, to wit, the happiness that may be expected in heaven, but are set down in three or four different expressions, for commending of the same. The first is, *I will give him to eat of the hidden Manna.* *Manna* is called (*Psal. 105.*) *Angels food*; and *Joh. 6.* *bread from heaven.* It is, in a word, the most excellent and refreshing food; yea, Christ Himself, who is called *the true bread from heaven*, *Joh. 6.* *of whom whosoever eateth shall not die.* It is *hidden Manna*, possibly relating to that pot of *Manna* that was kept within the Ark of the testimony: and so pointeth at such food as is hid with CHRIST in GOD, and to be enjoyed with GOD in the heavens: which was typified by the *most holy*. However it importeth.

First, The excellency of this food, and the satisfaction which the overcomer may expect: it is inconceivable and inexpressible, *The eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard of it, nor hath it entred in mans heart to conceive thereof*, *Isaiah 64.* Secondly, It importeth its sickness: it is *hid*, it cannot but be sure to the overcomer, seeing it is kept in the secret place of the most High. Thirdly, It importeth the rarity and singularity of this excellency, being a thing altogether unknown to the world, as if it were hidden: in which respects (*Coloss. 3. 3.*) *our life is said to be hid with Christ in God.* The second expression, is, *I will give him a white Stone*: white stones were used in those dayes, for two ends, as may be gathered from Heathen writers. 1. In their wrestlings and games, he that overcame, and was victor, got a white stone, as a badge of honour put upon him. 2. It was used in Civil Courts (when men were accused and challenged of crimes) to be given as a sign of absolution: thus a man that was found innocent and absolved, got a white stone, and he that was condemned got a black stone: both answer well here, where Christ promisseth to give to the overcomer a *Crown*, in pledge of his victory, and a full, publick and open absolution in the great Day, before men and Angels. 3. This *white stone* hath a *new Name written upon it*: a *Name*, is some honourable thing; a *new name*, is something eminently honourable: It was the Lords way to change the name of some, whom He eminently loved; and for confirmation of his favour to them, He gave them new Names: so he did to *Abraham*, *Jacob*, &c. This saith that the believing overcomer shall be made by Jesus Christ quite another thing, where he shall have such Glory and Majesty bestowed upon him, as will need a new Name to express the same, and make him think himself another thing than ever he thought to have been. We take it, on the matter, to be that same which is expressed, *chap. 3. v. 12.* by having the *Name of God*, and *Christs new Name written upon them*. 4. It is a *Name which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it*. This must be an excellent motto that only the spiritual senses of the receiver is able to discern the excellency thereof, so that no on-looker can tell what the satisfaction, dignity, and honour of such a person is; but he who is possessed with the same: and proportionally, these who are made joint heirs of the same Glory. These promises may in any part be applicable to the first fruits of the Spirit that the Believers are partakers of here: which, in respect of carnal delights, are unspeakable and glorious, and such as pass all understanding; yet the proper fulfilling of them, and the main scope of the place, is to be applyed only to the enjoyments that believers have to expect in heaven: when they shall reap the full Harvest, and be brought to the possession of the kingdom prepared for them: for, all of them do presuppose a full accomplished victory before they be attained: which cannot be expected in this life. O but heaven must be an excellent happiness: seeing the satisfaction thereof is so inexpressible! even the Apostle *Paul* who was ravished to the third heavens, must give it over, and say, he heard what was impossible to be uttered, *2 Cor. 12.*

## LECTURE VI.

Verf. 18. *And unto the Angel of the Church in Thyatira, write, These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brasse,*

19. *I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works, and the last to be more then the first.*

20. *Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou suffereft that woman Jezebel, which calleth her self a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.*

21. *And I gave her space to repent of her fornication, and she repented not.*

22. *Behold I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.*

23. *And I will kill her children with death, and all the Churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.*

24. *But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak, I will put upon you none other burden.*

25. *But that which ye have already, hold fast till I come.*

26. *And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the Nations:*

17. *(And he shall rule them with a rod of iron: as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers) even as I received of my Father.*

28. *And I will give him the morning star.*

29. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.*

**T**His is the fourth Epistle, directed to the Church of this stile to himself in this place, is, because he is Sovereign to Thyatira. The division is common with the rest of reprove faults in, and to give directions unto His Church; and the Epistles, to wit, 1. An Inscription, *ver. 18.* that with severe threatnings in reference to persons that were guilty: therefore, to make all the more weighty, he taketh this stile.

2. The Body of the Epistle, *ver. 19, 20, 21, 22,* 23, 24, 25. The Conclusion is in the rest.

In the Inscription Christ taketh three titles to himself; The first is, Thus saith the Son of God. This is (to say so) His royal Stile, than which there can be none higher; For, 1. It beareth out his God-head: for, Christ is not the Son of God by Adoption, as Believers are; but he is the Son of God by an eternal Generation, being begotten of the Father in an inconceivable way: in which respect, he is frequently called the only begotten of the Father, 1 Joh. 14. 18. and the brightness of his glory, and express image of his person, Heb. 1. 3. 2. It points out the unity of the Essence of the God-head, which is common to the Father and the Son: for, this same that is the Son of God here, as being a distinct person from the Father, is the first and the last, *who is, who was, and is to come, the Almighty*; Chap. 1. 8. 11. which are essential Attributes of the God-head. 3. This title being compared with the Vision in the former Chapter, wherein Christ was spoken of as true Man, doth point out the union of the two Natures in one Person: for, the Son of Man, is the Son of God; and the same Person who is the Son of God, is the Son of Man. All which are considerations that bear forth excellency in Him; and give ground of comfort to his People. The reason why he taketh

The other two Titles, are taken out of the Vision, Chap. 1. To wit, *who hath eyes as a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brasse.* The first of them, setteth forth His Omniscience, that is able to reach the secrets of hearts, and discover the hypocrisy of the most subtle hypocrite. Answerable to this title (*verf. 23.*) He is said to *search the heart and the reins*: and his being manifested to be such, is his being known to have eyes like unto a flame of fire. The last title, *and his feet like unto fine brasse,* sheweth the incorruptness and justness of his way in managing the affairs of his house, and his sovereign irresistible manner in promoting his designs; as having both absolute Authority to Govern, and absolute power to execute what he intendeth. Answerable to this, *ver. 23.* He is said to *render to every one according to their works.* He taketh the first of these two titles: because he is to discover the hypocrisy of a counterfeit Prophetess. And he taketh the last: because he is to threaten her and her followers.

In the body of the Epistle (beside the general asserting of His Omniscience) there are four main things, 1. There is a commendation, *verf. 19.* 2. There is a quarrel, with some aggravations thereof, *verf. 20. and 21.* 3. There is a threatening



including a duty, or, comprehending the way how the thing threatened might be prevented, *vers. 22. and 23. this is in reference to them that were corrupted.* 4. There is a mitigation of the threatening, or, a consolation laid down in reference to these that were kept free from these corruptions, *ver. 24. 25.*

The commendation is great, both as to the extent of the matter commended, and as to the qualification thereof. Beside the general, *I know thy works*, the things commended in them, are set down in five words, exceeding comprehensive. The first is, their charity, or love: this setteth forth the inward frame of their heart in reference to God and the Saints; and is, in effect, the sum and fulfilling of both the Tables of the Law. This was defective in *Ephesus*. The second is, their Service: this looketh to their ministering to the Saints of their substance, and otherwise; and is a fruit and proof of the former. The third is their Faith; which respecteth not only the purity of their profession, by their keeping themselves from Error; but mainly it looketh to their exercising of faith in him, and dependence on him: for, it is faith, to wit, the grace of faith that is commended here, as it is the grace of love, patience, &c. The fourth thing, is, *patience*: which is a fruit of faith; and importeth their submitting to suffering for the Gospel of Christ, without fainting or shifting in respect of the outward profession before others, or fretting in respect of the inward frame of their Spirit as to themselves, notwithstanding of all these sufferings. The fifth word is, *and thy works*; which generally looketh to the strain of their carriage, which by this the Lord holdeth forth as commendable. All these being put together, they shew an excellent frame this Church once had, and withall, give a Copie unto us. Yet there is a circumstance or qualification added, which doth exceedingly lighten the commendation, that is, *and the last to be more than the first*. The meaning whereof, is, although thou hast been in a good condition for charity, patience, works, &c. since the beginning, yet thy last works are, for extent in practice, for liveliness in the degree, and for a spiritual manner of performing of them, beyond what they were; so that her present condition is set forth to be a growing condition, which doth confirm her to have been really sincere and in a most lively frame. The commendation was excellent; but this qualification putteth the crown upon it: for, where a decay cometh upon the graciousness of a peoples frame, (as was in *Ephesus*) or, where there is an up-sitting without progress, these become as a dead flie that maketh all the box of ointment to stink.

The challenge followeth, *ver. 20. and 21.* 1. Generally proposed. 2. Particularly expressed. 3. It is agreed. Who could have thought that the next word to such an excellent commendation, should be a *notwithstanding*? but this sheweth, 1. The deceitfulness and desperateness of our corruption, that may have its influence beside much grace, as hath been frequently marked. 2. It sheweth the Lords condescending and graciousness, who giveth such a testimony, even where there are faults. The general expression is, *I have a few things against thee*: which is the same, upon the matter; and so to be understood as was spoken to *Pergamos*, *vers. 14.* We shall therefore say no more of it.

More particularly, the quarrel is, *because thou sufferest that woman Jezabel, which calleth her self a prophetess, &c.* For clearing of which, we would, 1. consider *Jezabels* fault, which the Lord chargeth upon her. 2. The Angel's fault, for which he is charged, who yet was free of her gross evils.

For the first: *Jezabel* is described by her name and practice. It is not to be thought that there was such a woman, bearing such a name, or owning the practices of *Jezabel* Queen of *Israel*, who is recorded, *1 King. 16. 31. &c.* But it is like there hath been in this Church some impudent woman, who, for her sur-

thering the abominable Sect of the *Nicolaitans*, getteth this name *Jezabel*, to make her and her Tenents the more odious, even as in the former Epistle, some were said to hold the doctrine of *Balaam*, for this very end. For *Jezabels* practice, *1 King. 16. &c.* is recorded to be infamous for these two, 1. For gross idolatry and the spreading thereof. 2. For painting and fairing her self in an impudent way, which insinuateth her being guilty of Adultery and uncleanness. Which two being the faults whereof this counterfeited prophetess was guilty, the holy Ghost giveth her this name of *Jezabel*: thereby to scare his People the more from her, &c. for, what ever she intended, she was, upon the matter, but a *Jezabel*. By this it appeareth also, that she hath been some special promoter of the Sect of the *Nicolaitans*: for, we will find her practice and Tenents to agree therewith. 1. She calleth her self a prophetess, that is, she took on her, and so gave out her self, as if she had been extraordinarily inspired by the holy Ghost, thereby to gain more credit to her opinions. It's marked in ancient History, that there was never almost an eminent Heretic or Heretick, but had some special woman for the promoters thereof, who oftentimes took to themselves the names of prophetesses. *Eusebius lib. 5. cap. 16.* (which is cited in the second Centurie, *cap. de Heres.*) marketh it of many: *Simon Magus* had his *Helena*; *Carpocrates* his *Marcellina*; *Apelles* his *Philumena*; *Montanus* had two, whom he called prophetesses, to wit, *Priscilla* and *Maximilla*, and *Augustine* frequently mentioneth one *Lucilla*, who was a great ring-leader of the *Donatists*: so it is like the *Nicolaitans* had such a prophetess, for furthering of their designe.

If it be asked, *why the devil seeketh thus to engage women, and to put them on the top of such designs?*

*Answ.* These reasons may be given,

1. Because often women are most easily engaged and carried furthest on in the delusion; and it is not so easie to make a man give out himself for a prophet, as a woman to take on her the name of a prophetess. This general we may gather from, *2 Timothy 3. 6, 7.*

2. Women are most eager, vehement, and diligent in pursuing what they are engaged into: even late times may teach how they may prevail and insinuate on many by their diligence, if we consider what is recorded of *Mistress Hutchinson* and some others, mentioned in that little Story of the Rise, Reigne, and Ruine of *Familists*, *Libertines*, &c. in New England.

3. Women are oftentimes less suspected than men; and any seeming parts or abilities, which in the Lords secret Justice they may be furnished with, is usually more admired and taking than in men, as if it looked like a thing above nature. This same consideration, occasioned a Schism in *Phrygia*, because some had more respect to *Montanus* his prophetesses, than was fit.

4. Women also have more secret, and private access to tempt and infect others, than men can have: for, partly, they are less suspected; partly, more slighted and despised by others; partly also, more forborn because of their sexe than men would be: whereupon often they arrogate to themselves a greater liberty and impudency in speaking when they are corruptly principled, than would be suffered in men.

And lastly, There is more access for them to converse with women, and to infuse their venom in them than there is for men.

*Eusebius* marketh this as a reason of such Hereticks associating with women, that thereby there might be the greater facility to seduce the simple of both sexes. Sometimes also they were helpful by their means and credite to further Sect-masters in their designs, and to hold them on in them: sometimes again they were exceeding dexterous and diligent in venting and spreading false reports upon honest Ministers, and to beget a favourable opinion of these that were erroneous. All which tend

tend exceedingly to the promoting of Error and to the hurrying of the truth. And we will find *Augustine* often complaining of the malicious reports that this *Lacilla* used to spread upon them, whereby the calumnies of the *Donatists* were strengthened. Upon which grounds and the like, we may see what the devils design is: in seeking to engage such in the head of such a design. This then is the first fault charged on her, that contrary to truth, and without warrant from God, she did call her self a prophetesse; even though she had not proposed any Error.

Her second fault is, that she *teacheth*: this was forbidden, *1 Cor. 14. 34.* and *1 Tim. 2. 12.* And it appeareth, that even these Prophetesses, who had an extraordinary Gift from God, as *Philips* daughters had, *Acts 21.* Yet were not publickly and Authoritatively to Preach: for, *Paul* commands them silence, *1 Cor. 14.* even when he is speaking of extraordinary Prophets. And we will not find in the New Testament (at least) any ground for a woman publickly to officiate in the Ministry of the Gospel, as an Authorized Office-bearer.

The third part of her challenge, is, that by her Teaching she did seduce: which is a challenge to her, though she had been guilty of none of the former two. This, to wit, seduction and leading of people out of the way of Truth, doth ever almost follow upon persons usurping a Calling to themselves, or upon persons stepping without their own bounds and station to Teach; and we will seldom find persons to run unsent in any of the former respects; but itching after some new thing, hath had influence upon them, to carry them without their bounds, as we may see in *Jezebel* here, and ordinarily through the Scripture and Church-history. The particulars wherein she seduced her hearers, are two. The first is, to commit fornication, that is, by her asserting fornication to be no sin, she occasioned and stirred them up to take liberty therein, which possibly other-ways they would not have done. The second is, to eat things sacrificed to Idols, that is, by propounding the indifferency of meats, and pretending to Christian-liberty, she induced them without all respect to scandal, to eat of these things, to the stumbling, grieving, and wounding of others that were weak and tender: which two, are the very doctrines and practices of the *Nicolaitans*, as was shown in the Epistles to *Ephesus* and *Pergamos*.

But it is a different quarrel from this which the Lord hath with the Angel: It's expressed thus, *because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, &c.* that is, not that they countenanced her in her Errors, or did hear her in her Teaching; but that they suffered her, and did not impede her. If it be asked, *How they can be quarrelled for suffering of her, seeing they were not Magistrates, nor had civil Authority to restrain her?* Answ. That is not the quarrel; but this, that they being invested by Christ Jesus with Church-power to censure corrupt Ministers, and cut off rotten Members, did not exercise the same in censuring and Excommunicating of this false Prophetesse and these that adhered to her, as *Ephesus* had censured the false Apostles, *vers. 2.* So, on the matter, it's the same fault which is condemned in *Pergamos*, *vers. 15.* who had such corrupt Members in their society, and did not by Excommunication cut them off: which sheweth that the Church is invested with such a Power (for, no civil Power can be alledged here) and that the neglecting of the exercise thereof, is exceedingly displeasing to Christ Jesus.

If it be asked, 1. *How Church-censures, when backed with no civil Authority, can impede one to teach?* 2. *Why the Lord is so displeased with Church-rulers their suffering of corrupt teachers?* 3. *If this relate any way to civil Powers as well as Ecclesiastick?*

To the first, we answer, Although Church-censures have no civil compulsion with them or bodily violence or strength to re-

strain any from corrupt teaching; yet they have a threefold weight, when rightly gone about: they have an authority and weight as to the conscience of the gain-sayer: because censures, being the Ordinance of Jesus Christ, and, as it were, a seal put by His Authority to a conditional threatening, they have a stamp of His Majesty upon them: and so they serve to humble men, or to revenge their disobedience: and therefore these who seemingly profess to despise sentences, want not an inward apprehension of the terrour of Excommunication, and would gladly not have that sentence past upon them. 2. If men obstinately suppress the weight of the censure upon the conscience, as well as of the Word; yet, being a mean appointed of God for the restraining of such evils, it's oftentimes countenanced by Him, if not to the humbling, yet to the lasting of such persons in their designs: whereby in His secret Providence and Justice it often cometh to passe that sentences against such persons, are eminently owned and countenanced by Him, with some concurring dispensation, evidencing His ratifying of the same, as sometimes, such, are in Justice given up to more vile delusions, sometimes to grosse out-breakings in practice, sometimes their very natural judgement and senses are blasted, their credit and reputation vanisheth, and, it may be, some way He doth signally follow them with His own immediate Hand by some stroke upon their Estates, Persons, or Families, even when they seem to be countenanced by civil Power, as it is written in Church-story He did to *Simon Magus*, & *Arrius* after he was Excommunicated, by taking him away in the very height of his insolency, who having again recovered Court and being in a solemn manner with many attendants coming to appear for his pretended vindication, was smitten as he thought with a desire to ease himself, and for that end withdrawing to a retiring place in one of the streets of *Constantinople*, he did instantly expire, and having been waited-for long by his attendants, was at last found dead in the fear, his intestines being dissolved and voided. That little Book (formerly cited) of the Rise, and Reigne of the *Familiists*, &c. hath some dreadful instances of this. Thus the Lord hath often made such a way to stink, by smiting the head thereof in some extraordinary manner. And though this be not the proper end of Excommunication; yet when it meeteth with mens corruptions, it is often a just consequent thereof. And these, or such like wayes of disappointment, cannot be so warrantably expected where this Ordinance is not improved: because it hath the promise, and is a mean appointed for this end, that men may learn not to blaspheme, as the Apostle speaketh, *1 Tim. 1. 20.* 3. It hath weight as to others, to scare them from countenancing of such; and is, as it were, a Mark or Beakon set upon them, thereby to give warning to others for eschewing of their company, as it is, *Rom. 16. 17. 18.* and in many other places: and if it have this fruit, it cannot but in a great part blast their designe. Now, the neglect of this sentence, made all these restraints void, as if no weight had been in Christs Ordinance: this was the Angels fault.

As to the second, to wit, wherefore Christ is so displeased with the suffering of corrupt Teachers, we may gather the reasons thereof from what is said: For, 1. it sheweth little zeal to His Glory, when His Name is suffered to be blasphemed. 2. It sheweth little love to His People, when they are suffered to be seduced. 3. It sheweth little respect to His Ordinances, when they are not made use of for the end appointed, and when corrupt men are suffered to invert the order appointed by Him: in a word, Error and false Teachers have brought more reproach upon the Name of Christ and Profession of the Gospel, and have made Religion more despicable to profane men, than any grosse out-breakings have done: also, moe souls have been destroyed thereby, and that speedily with swift destruction, *2 Pet. 2.* and, as it were, carrying them away with a flood, as it is, *chap. 12.* Lastly, Other sins are fallen into, by some more pre-



text at least, of temptation and corruptions prevailing, but this is done with a high Hand, whereby men not only break the command themselves, but teach others so to do, *Matth. 5. 19.* And therefore it is called a Teaching of rebellion against the Lord, *Jer. 28. 16.* and is fallen into, with more deliberation than other sins: for which cause, an Heretick is said to be condemned of Himself, *Tit. 3. 11.* Which being put together, with many other aggravations of this sin of corrupt Teaching, and its that follow thereupon, it is no marvel that the Lord Jesus who is jealous of His Glory, and affected with the hazard of His People, be exceedingly displeased at the neglect of such a duty, as is the using of the Authority which he hath given to His Church-officers for edification, and particularly for the curbing of corrupt Teachers, and the taking of the foxes that spoil the Vines. *Song. 2. 15.*

We suppose now, it is not difficult to Answer to the third Question, to wit, If the suffering of corrupt Teachers be reprovable in men, who have civil Authority to restrain the same? For, the same grounds that ought to awaken zeal in Ministers against this ill, ought also to stir up Magistrates zealously in their places to use their Authority for vindicating of the Name of Christ, and preventing of the hurt of His Church and People, seeing the Sword is not delivered to them in vain, but for the terror of them that do evil, *Rom. 13. 3.* Sure we are, in the Old Testament, Magistrates were included within the command of restraining and punishing such as did intise to false Worship, as well as the Priests were, *Deut. 13. 1. &c.* And, in the New Testament, we find no repeal of the same: and though there be no instance thereof in the Gospel, or Acts of the Apostles, because Magistrates were not then Christian; yet, in the progress of this Book of Revelation, we will find, that when Magistrates became Christian, it's looked upon as reprovable in them that countenanced Antichrist; and it's highly commended in these, that out of zeal to God, should withdraw from the whore and burn her with fire, *chap 17. vers. 16, 17.* And seeing in the Scripture, all Sect-masters are accounted Antichrists, as *Mat. 24. 1. Job. 2. 18. 2 Epistle, vers. 7. &c.* can there be any better rule to try what is duty in reference to them, than by what is approved of God in reference to him who is the prime Antichrist? And this is clear, that the Lord hath not more clearly engaged Himself to fight against any Error by His Word than this; yet, He will not have that a pretext to Magistrates for shunning to exercise their civil Power against Him; We see also in Church-historie, that the most tender Magistrates, when they were in the best frame, have ever, been most zealous in this, as by the examples of *Constantin, Gratianus, Theodosius, &c.* is clear: and the most untender friends, or greatest enemies of the Truth, have striven to have all sorts of Religions equally tolerated, or, at least, to have a sort of harmony amongst them, by the removing, or burying of all Laws Civil and Ecclesiastick, that did strike against some Errors. In reference to the first, it's observed by *Ammianus* an Heathen writer, and a great friend to *Julian*, that amongst other devices that *Julian* used to root out Christianity, this was one, that he gave toleration openly to all the different Professions that were amongst Christians, (which then after the Council of *Nice* were very many (and required no more of them, but that they should abstain from civil discords; and so without fear follow any Religion they pleased. The words are (as they are cited by *Ludovicus Molineus*, pag. 560.) *ut consopitis civilibus discordiis, sue quisque Religioni serviret intrepidus.* And certainly, it can be no acceptable service to Jesus Christ, to follow that way, which this expert child of the devil made use of against Him. And *Anastasis* also, is condemned for this, that he endeavoured such an oblivion, or *amnesia* in the Church, as tended to suppress all the former Canons, Decrees, or Confessions, which had been enacted in the former famous general Councils

against grosse Errors, as may be seen in the beginning of the sixth Centurie of the Church-historie. Lastly, This is also sure, that the asserting that Magistrates ought not *de jure*, or might not *de facto*, meddle with restraining of Hereticks, was ever in the Primitive times accounted a grosse Error. *Augustine* professeth himself sometime to have been of that opinion; yet often in his writings doth he professe himself to have been convinced with the reasons of his brethren, and with the experience that he had both of the necessity and advantage of the Magistrates interposing in such a thing; so that he became a most vehement presser of this, as in his Epistles is clear: and he seareth not to account the opposers of this, (to wit, such as pleaded for toleration from Magistrates) amongst Hereticks; and often nameth them under the Title of *Rogatiani*, from one who it seemeth, was some eminent pleader for this forbearance, and one of the *Donatists* party.

It is not intended that Magistrates, or Ministers, should account alike of all Errors or Hereticks; much lesse that indifferently the highest degrees of civil punishments, or Church-censures, should be execute against them; but that according to Spiritual prudence, both Civil and Church Authority should be exercised, for the restraining of such evil workers from, and punishing of them, for hurting of the Church of Christ and dishonouring of His Name. In which, Christian prudence will make difference, 1. between Errors that destroy the foundation, and are called *damnable*, 2 *Pet. 2. 1, 2, &c.* and other Errors, which are consistent with the foundation, although they be as hay or stubble built thereon. 2. Difference is to be made between Errors that are simple Doctrinal, such as these that are about the object of Predestination, order of Gods Decrees, or such like: wherein certainly there is a right and a wrong, yet are they not so intolerable as Errors that imply a Schism in practice to the renting of the union of the Church, as these Errors of the *Novatians* and *Donatists* were. 3. Difference also is to be made, betwixt a man who entertaineth an erroneous opinion, and an other who is an Heretick, that is, who not only after admonition, doth continue in the same opinion; but also doth persist to vent and propagat the same to the hurt and offence of others. 4. Although he that is seduced is guilty, as the seducer is; yet reason would put a difference between him that actively teacheth and seduceth, and him that is out of weaknesse seduced, and is but a follower of such a leader. 5. There may be a censuring in some degree either by civil or Church-Authority, when yet there is no procedour to any high degree in either: and thus the censuring in some cases, may be distinguished, not only from forbearance and negligence; but also from such censures as may appear rigid, or unseasonable: thus *Paul* sometimes reproveth and threatneth in the Epistles to the *Corinthians* and *Galatians*, when yet he will neither altogether forbear them, nor passe the highest sentences upon them. Christian prudence is to lay weight upon such and such considerations in the managing of such an Authority; but still so as nothing extinguish that zeal which Magistrates and Church-officers ought to have for exercising of their respective Authorities in restraining of such an evil. But we will insist no more on this.

Followeth now, that we should consider the aggravations of the Lords quarrel, both in respect to *Jezebel*, and to the Angel. They are two, relating to both: 1. *She seduced Christs servants*: and this is the greater guilt both in reference to her practice, and also to their suffering of her. 2. It's aggregated from this, *verse. 21. I gave her space to repent of her fornication and she repented not*: whereby it appeareth, that she had continued for a time in her practice, and, notwithstanding of Gods forbearance, had not amended: therefore her sinful practice, and their neglective forbearance, became the more inexcusable.

Concerning the first aggravation, we are to consider. 1. Who are

are to be understood by this Title, *Christs Servants*. 2. Why they get this Title in this place. To the first we say, By *Christs Servants*, are not understood men indifferently: for, heathens and those that are without the Church, get not this name; but it is peculiarly applied to the whole house of *Israel*, *Lev. 25. 55.* and so here it is to be applied these two wayes, 1. To Christians and Church-members: so *Jezabel* aimed not to seduce Pagans, and infect them with her Errors, but Christians and Church-members. 2. It may respect some more eminent in the Church nor others for Parts or Profession: and so amongst Church-members she aimed most to seduce these that were found in the matter of Doctrine, and infected with no Error; and these that were clean in their conversation and free of grosse scandals, rather than such as were grosse and offensive in their carriage. Both these are clear in matter of fact by experience: and by proportion it will follow, that as Hereticks, upon their own considerations, seek to infect Church-members rather than these that are without; so among Church-members they will seek rather to engage these who are eminent for parts, blameless in their carriage, or appearing to be gracious, than others, who are not of such esteem. For the second, to wit, why Christ giveth them this Title in this place who were seduced? We may give these reasons for it, 1. It is to aggrege the guilt of both, as hath been said. 2. It is to give the alarm and warning unto these that are His own People, being even His Servants may be seduced. 3. It is to shew His own resentment of the successe of Error in His Church the more, that it draweth away these that stand in such a relation to Him, and (as it were) diminisheth the number of His Familie and Servants.

For further opening of this aggravation these things may be enquired into, 1. If any truly gracious may be engaged by false Teachers and seduced to Error? 2. What may be the reasons that maketh the devil aim at the seduction of Christs Servants, rather than others? 3. Why Christ doth so expressly aggrege this guiltiness upon this account?

In Answer to the first Question, we say, first, That these that are truly gracious, are not so readily and frequently seduced to Error, at least to be leaders therein and promoters thereof, as they are unto grosse practical offences: For, 1. we will not find in Scripture so many examples of the one as of the other. 2. It is a most rare thing for an opposer to get Repentance, 2 *Tim. 2. 25, 26.* and therefore the Believers; yea, even the Elect before their conversion cannot be said frequently to fall in this evil. 3. It's an ill that is followed with more deliberation, and cometh not from the surprising of some particular temptation, as other grosse evils do: therefore cannot be so consistent with gracious principles, and a spiritual walk, as particular outbreacking wherein a person is captivated. 4. To be a Teacher of Error, is to be a Teacher of rebellion against the Lord, *Jer. 28.* and to be a Minister and promoter of Satans kingdom, 2 *Cor. 11. 14, 15.* which at first appeareth to be abominable unto any of a gracious principle, and more than a sin of infirmities. 5. Also the promises seem especially to relate to Gods guiding of His People in the way of Truth, and keeping them from being seduced by false Teachers: which, though it be not to be extended simplie to all; yet it appeareth it is to be extended further than in reference to practicall scandals.

Yet secondly, we say, That it is possible, even for these that are truly gracious to be seduced to Error: for, 1. There are promises indeed that they shall be kept from the sin against the holy Ghost, and from total and final apostasie and impenitency in respect of any ill; but there is no promise that a Believer otherwise shall be kept from any ill incident to one that is un-renewed. 2. Even Believers have corruption, and so have much darknesse and ignorance in their judgement, and much perverseness in their inclination and affections. It cannot be thought strange than, that they be capable to be carried away by a

temptation to Error, there being no ill but it hath a party in them to take part with it. 3. The many warnings that are given in Scripture, even to Believers, to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadduces, to beware of false Prophets that come in sheeps cloathing, &c. shew, that they are not without the reach of the hurt of such a temptation. 4. Experience also doth confirm this: for, it seemeth that in some measure *Solomon* wanted not his accession to this evil, if we consider what is recorded, not only of his suffering of corrupt worship to be within his Dominion; but also of his countenancing of the same, by building altars and otherwayes, although we cannot particularly determine. Neither can it be denied, but that some of these that were seduced by false Teachers in *Corinth* and *Galatia*, might be gracious: and in after-times also it hath been out of question.

To the second, to wit, wherefore Satan aimeth to seduce Christs Servants unto Error rather than others? We may answer in these reasons, 1: He doth it, because his hatred is most at such; and it's their ruine, which especially he hunteth for. 2. Because men that are in Error and profanity already, are his own; and it's no gain for him to take pains to seduce them unto such delusions, so long, at least, as they continue such. 3. He hath other more suitable baits for other men that are given to grosse ills: therefore he reserveth this for others. 4. In some respect, these who have a form of Religion, or some inclination towards it (especially if weak in knowledge) are in some respect more obnoxious to this temptation than grossly profane men are: for they, like *Gallio*, care not what be Truth and what be Error: but one, who hath some tenderesse, and withall weak, is more ready to debate, and inquire for Truth; and so not being strong enough to rid himself of difficulties, he is the more easily intangled. 5. Grosse temptations to profanity, are not so taking with them: therefore the devil assaileth them by this, that under the colour of some new discoverie of Truth, or some more perfect way of Christianity, or such like, he may draw them to Error: and, by this more subtle temptation, whereby he transformeth himself to an Angel of light, he doth often prevail when other temptations would not. 6. It's most advantageous to his way, to have some eminent for piety and parts engaged for it: for, by this, he gaineth credit to it, and maketh it the better digest with others, who often respect an opinion, as they respect these who own the same: thus he aimeth at this as a main engine whereby he may prevail with many; whereas the engaging of profane men bringeth no credit to such a way; neither is it his advantage to divert them from their profanity. It was a great stumbling in old, especially in the case of the *Novatians*, that many confessors and eminent men were drawn away with that Error: and this was often cast-up to the Orthodox, as a matter of great weight: whereupon *Cyprian*, in his book *De unitate Ecclesie*, taketh occasion particularly to Answer this Objection, that people be not prejudged at Truth, because of some mens name; especially, considering that there were many more eminent of the contrary mind. And, by the way, this slight of the devil may be observed, that men will make more work, and greater noise in commending Error by the name of one or two that favour the same, as if that were of so great weight, than they will allow to Truth, though it have many more eminent names standing for it. 7. When men are aiming to be serious in Religion, the devil casteth this stumbling in their way, that if he prevail not to draw them to Error, he may at least mar them or divert them, by putting them through other, in making them debate such and such needlesse Questions; and so keep them from the more serious and profitable exercise of Repentance, self-examination, making of their Calling and Election sure, &c. Hence it is, that while men lye in security or profanity, they are not much troubled with this temptation; but being once awakened, then he



he setteth upon them, if so be he may extinguish that wakening, or give them a wrong set before they be fully formed and settled. And this is one reason why Errors and delusions do often accompany the first rise of the Gospel amongst people. 8. By seducing of these that appear to be Godly, the devil bringeth most reproach upon the Name of Christ and Religion, and maketh it the more to be stumbled at by these that are in nature, as being but some fancie and conceit, which would not follow upon the fall of many profane men: therefore he aimeth rather to seduce them that are Christs Servants and appear to be Godly.

To the third, We may see why the Lord especially aggregeth His quarrel from this, 1. Because His Servants come more near to Him than others. 2. He will have us knowing that Error is not to be extenuated or commended, nor false Teachers to be tolerated, even though many of His Servants should come to countenance the same: yea, on the contrary, it is the more aggregated and to be abhorred. 3. He doth by this shew the Church officers, that the moe that are engaged to love Error or follow false Teachers, they ought to be the more stirred up with zeal in their duty against seducers, that they have prevailed with many of his servants. And by this, he sheweth his tenderesse to affectionate Professors, rather to censure for their sake corrupt Teachers whom they respect, than to forbear them. 4. This is also mentioned, to shew this woman, and all corrupt Teachers, what they gain by having most successe against Christs Servants, to wit, this, that they have the more guilt, and are the more obnoxious to Christs quarrel. 5. The moe advantages the devil hath to his kindgom by the seduction of Christs, concerneth Him the more in that to oppose him, as in a thing, which in a special manner reflecteth upon His honour; which maketh Him so to quarrel for *Jezabels* practice, and the toleration of the same.

From all which, what we have said, is confirmed, to wit, that corrupt Teachers are not to be tolerated in a Church, even when civil Powers do take no notice of them: it is well known from the History of the Primitive times, that several Godly and zealous men have censured; yea, and even Excommunicated many Hereticks, as *Arrians* and others, when they have been sure to be instantly persecuted for the same: and it is recorded of some, who though they were threatened before hand, that yet having first provided their Churches with well qualified Successours, they did afterward proceed to pronounce sentence; thereby shewing their readinesse to undergo what ever trouble might follow upon that same account, and withal their zeal and tender care of the Churches edification.

We come now to the second aggravation, which is in *vers. 21.* and it is made up of these two. 1. There is a forbearance upon the Lords side, *I gave her space to repent*, that is, I did not suddenly and at first execute judgement upon her; but did for a time forbear her, thereby giving her an opportunity to repent: and indeed His long suffering and forbearance, doth of it self lead to repentance, according to what is said, *Rom. 2. vers. 4.*

The second part, is, *but she repented not*: which holdeth forth the abuse of this mercy upon her side, to wit, that notwithstanding of the Lords forbearance the continued in her former practice without repenting of, or turning from, the same: therefore she is the more inexcusable, and they also in suffering of her. This aggravation doth import these four, First, that the Lords forbearing of a sinner, ought to be an inducement to them to repent, as is clear from that place, *Rom. 2. 4.* Secondly, It importeth that sometimes God will give time and opportunity to repent, by His forbearance, unto most grosse sinners; and suffer with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fited to destruction, *Rom. 9. 22.* Thirdly, It importeth also, that such opportunities are often abused; and particularly, that it's a rare thing for an opposer of the Truth to repent,

The Apostle putteth a peradventure in it, *2. Tim. 2. 25.* in meeknesse instructing those that oppose themselves, if peradventure God will give them repentance &c. We find also, *Chap. 9.* and *16.* of this Book, that on the back almost of every plague upon Antichrists kingdom, it is marked, that yet they repented not for all that.

If any should ask the reason, why repentance is so rare in reference to this sin?

We answer. 1. It's a sin of a high nature, being deliberate and against sufficient grounds of conviction: and therefore, in Gods Justice, is plagued with impitenency beyond other sins: and as in some respect, it cometh nearer to the sin against the holy Ghost than other sins in its nature; so also in Gods Justice it cometh nearer to it in its punishment. 2. The nature of this sin is such, that men tainted with it, are thereby in a greater incapacity to repent than these who are guilty of grosse ills in practice: because, 1. Nature doth not so challenge and convince for sins against the Truths of the Gospel, as for sins against the Moral Law. 2. Because men in Errors and delusions have their judgements so engaged, blinded and prejudged, that they think often such Errors are no Errors: and therefore there is the greater difficulty to bring them to the acknowledgement of the Truth, and of their being wrong; and yet this must precede their repentance. 3. The Lord also by this doth set a mark upon this sin, to scare all from the same: men oftentimes think little of this ill, He hath therefore put this mark of His displeasure thereupon the more expressly. Hence it is, that His threatenings are more clearly and expressly annexed to the second and third Commandments than any other, that He may make men know He is jealous of His Truth and Ordinances, and will by no means acquit such as take His Name in vain, whatever men think of these sins. In the fourth place, this aggravation importeth, that when time and good opportunities are abused, guilt becometh the greater and the more inexcusable, and the Lords controversie becometh the more sharp.

There are two Conclusions aimed to be drawn from these words, by some, which no way they will bear, 1. Some say, that *Jezabel* had an ability and power to repent, seeing she hath time allotted to her for it, and God expecteth it of her. For Answer, To say nothing of this general, which is found to be an untruth from other clear Scriptures, which hold out men to be dead in sins, *Ephes. 2. 1.* &c. and unable for any spiritual good, These things will vindicate this place, 1. If we consider who this party is, to wit, a most vile Seducer and Adulteresse: and even such Patrons of nature, will grant, that such high and grosse sins do justly deprive persons of any ability to repent, and do incapacitate them for exercising of the same. 2. If we compare this with *2 Tim. 2. 25.* we will find that patient waiting upon opposers, and thereby giving them opportunity to repent, is one thing; and to have repentance given them, is another: for, many have time allowed them, when yet it's at a peradventure if God shall give them Repentance. Which sheweth, that Grace to exercise Repentance, when an opportunity is, must be given of God as well as the opportunity it self: otherways no opportunity can be rightly improved: which sheweth again, that men in such a case, have not this ability of themselves to repent. 3. The words do not speak out her ability; but what was her duty under such a long suffering dispensation, as the opening of the words cleareth.

If it be said then, How can she be more inexcusable?

Ans. 1. Because this inability is of her own on-bringing. 2. Because it was not inability that swayed her to continue in her sin, and reject Repentance; but it was her positive inclination to these Errors, and her avernesness from the Truths of God. And what ever men may dispute for the patronizing of nature against the Justice of God, now; yet when He cometh to judge, and when the conscience beareth witness of the vehement

ment affection and delight which men had to, and in their wickedness. There will be none who shall dare to enter a defence upon their inability, being in conscience they will be convinced, that that was not the thing which made them willingly choose such and such evils, and made them reject all means tending to recover them. 3. This also will make her, and such as she, inexcusable, that they did not improve such opportunities so as they might, and did not abstain from the following and committing of such gross evils, which even many unrenewed men have done; who yet had not ability to repent of themselves more than they: and thus, none in such a case will be able to say in judgement, that they did make such use of the Word and other means as they might have made, even in such a condition; or, that they have come that length in outward Reformation, that they might have done.

The second Conclusion pretended to be drawn from this, is, That the Lord hath an universal will to have all men saved, being He giveth her time to repent. This we say doth not follow hence: For, 1. suppose it might be said in some respect, that he willed the Repentance of such a particular person, who lived under His Ordinances, It will not follow thereupon, that He willeth the Salvation of all; even of such who never heard of Repentance. 2. It will not follow, God giveth some time, which ought to be improved to Repentance, and doth not instantly execute His Judgement, Therefore He willeth such a persons Salvation: for, God for a time forbore Pharaoh, even after he had evidenced his purpose in so doing, to be the exalting of His own Glory in his destruction, 3. If it were so, what might be said of such as the Lord doth not forbear, nor give time to repent; but taketh away in their sin, as he did *Zimri* and *Corbi*? It cannot be said on this ground, that He willeth their Salvation; and so not the Salvation of all. 4. It will not follow, Christ willeth persons to repent, Therefore He willeth their Salvation: because He may be said to will them to repent, when he requireth it of them as their duty; and thus, their duty of repenting, is the immediate object of His revealed and preceptive will: but a persons Salvation is the proper object of His will of good-pleasure, or of His decreeing and purposing will. And no otherways can He be said, to will such persons Salvation (because He commandeth them to repent) than this, to wit, than in His Word He hath signified Repentance to be such a persons duty, and that He hath appointed a connexion between Repentance and Salvation; which still relateth to His revealed will: even as when God made the first Covenant with Adam, it might be said that He willed Adam to be holy, and that by that Covenant He had made a connexion between holiness and life; yet it is not proper to say, that the Lord willed life to Adam upon that condition: because that looketh to the event, and respecteth the Lords will of purpose: which cannot but be effectual. And if the Lords willing of men (at least such as are under His Ordinances) to be saved be thus understood, as including only the duty which God layeth upon men, and the connexion that He hath made between it and Salvation in His Word, It may be admitted: but if it be extended to any antecedent will in God Himself, distinct from that which is called His revealed will, This place and such like will give no ground for such an Assertion. If it be asked then, Why did He give her space to repent, if He intended not her Salvation? *Answer*. To forbear deciding of what might be His purpose to this particular person, (who haply may be an Elect,) because nothing is decided of her final condition in the Word; These reasons may be given, 1. Thereby the Lord commendeth His Grace that doth so condescend to such a person. 2. The aggravation of her guilt and inexcusableness, are the more clear, as hath been said; and thereupon He hath the more access to manifest the spotlessness of His Justice, as is in the threatening, *verf. 23*. 3. It doth the more comfort and encourage a peni-

tent sinner, to step forward in the hope of Mercy, seeing even such a person as *Jezebel* hath had such an offer; and that she, if penitent and believing, would have been accepted.

The third thing in the Body of the Epistle, is, the threatening, *verf. 22*, and *23*. Whereby He again wonderfully presseth her, and these who were seduced by her, to the exercise of that much slighted duty of Repentance. The threatening hath three parts, 1. Something is threatened. 2. An exception is put in, leaving a door open to Mercy. 3. The scope or effect of the Lords executing this threatening, is set down. The thing threatened, is threefold, according to the several parties that He threatneth. 1. For *Jezebel*, *Behold, I will cast her upon a bed*: which pointeth out some remarkable stroke or plague threatened to be inflicted upon her, whereby she should become a spectacle to others, and yet not be instantly removed. 2. For them that commit adultery with her, *I will cast them into great tribulation*, that is, I will bring upon them that partake of her sin, whether in respect of spiritual or bodily adultery (for she was guilty of both) grievous and publick temporal strokes. And, 3. *I will kill her children with death*: for, her children, it's like were children begotten in their unclean conversing together: them the Lord threatens to remove; and thereby to give an evidence of His displeasure at their way, as He did *Dauids* child for his adultery. For, we conceive, the children of her spiritual whoredom, are understood under that expression, *these that commit adultery with her*. From which we may see, that gross Errors may procure many temporal and bodily crosses, as was formerly said.

Yet secondly (as is said) even this threatening hath a door open in it, and is not absolute, but conditional, *except they repent*, &c. which doth indeed exceedingly set forth and commend the Grace of God:

The third thing, is, the Lords end, which is the manifesting of Himself in two or three of His Attributes, to wit, His Omniscience, Justice, and Power, as was hinted in the entry. When the Lord forbeareth wicked men, He is either thought not to see, or know such things; or not to be just, and powerful to redress and avenge the same: and when He severely and publicly inflicteth judgment upon such, then He is known not only to be Omniscient, but also Just and Powerful; and this is that which He aimeth at, especially in His Churches.

The last thing, is, the mitigation of this threatening, *verf. 24, 25*. Wherein we may consider these two, First, To whom it is directed. Secondly, What is the mitigation itself. 1. It's directed, to you, *ye*; to you, in the plural number, that is, to the company of Ministers, who were designed by the Title *Angel*, at the entry. And to the rest in *Thyatira*, that is, the Members of the Church, contradistinguished from the Ministers. It's added, *that have not this Doctrine and have not known the depths of Satan, &c.* This is to distinguish the Church-members, that were pure and clean, from these that were corrupted with *Jezebels* doctrine. So there are three parties implied here, 1. The Ministers. 2. The pure Members. To both these this consolation is directed. 3. There are some led away with these corruptions, which are not included. The pure Members, are qualified and distinguished by these two, 1. *They have not this doctrine*, that is, they own not, nor maintain, nor approve this corrupt doctrine. 2. *They have not known the depths of Satan*, that is, they have not loved nor approved the same, nor in their practice experimentally meddled therewith. They, that is, corrupt Teachers, counted such doctrines and practices, depths and high mysteries and attainments in Religion: therefore they gave them this name of *depths*. And it's not to be thought that they called *depths of Satan*; but the Lord addeth this, to shew indeed what kind of depths they were: they are (saith He) depths indeed, as they speak; but they are the devils depths, or depths of Satan. Which



expression, holdeth out these two, 1. The great subtilty of the adversary of mans Salvation, the devil, he hath depths in his way; all his designs are not obvious; he can veil and cover things and make them appear far otherways than they are; and he exerciseth his subtilty most especially and deeply, in the carrying on of Error, and drawing of souls from the Truth: these are his depths here; and his subtilty is spoken of, 2 Cor. 11. 3. his wiles and cunning craftiness and special flight, Eph. 4. 14. whereby it cometh to pass that he intangleth, and, as it were, bewitcheth, Gal. 3. 1. many with the most gross delusions, 2. It holdeth out what influence delusion will have upon poor creatures; it will even make them cry up the most absurd Errors for mysteries and depths, as if there were nothing in Religion so excellent as these.

The mitigation it self, is in two expressions: the first, is negative, *vers. 24. I will put upon you none other burden*, that is, in sum, I will not give you any other direction, nor prescribe to you any new duty, beside what formerly ye have had given unto you, and to which ye have submitted: for, though *burden* sometimes signifie some weighty threatening, or denunciation, or judgment, as may be gathered from *Jer. 1. 23.* Yet in this place, it cannot be so understood; but must be understood as it implieth some new duty beside what formerly was imposed upon them, as the exposition in the next verse doth clear. And so sometimes in Scripture, duty is compared to a burden and yoke: not because of its burdennesse and troublesomeness, in respect of it self; but because every duty hath some obligation with it, which in respect of our corruptions and infirmities are burdens, though by Christ Jesus they become light.

The second part of the mitigation, is positive, *vers. 25. and will help to expound the former, But that which ye have already, hold fast till I come*: which doth imply, First, That they had some duties prescribed unto them already: whereby it appeareth that an *other burden*, did signifie some other duty: for, that was the thing they had already. Secondly, It sheweth, That by having of such duties (to speak so) is not only understood the having of them prescribed unto them; but their being a great length in the obedience thereof, as may be gathered from the like Phrase. *chap. 3. 11. where hold that fast which thou hast*, doth signifie their endeavour to keep what they had attained to. And thus the meaning of this mitigation here, is, I have prescribed to you that are pure in *Thyatira*, no other duty or direction; but that with all sincerity and zeal ye keep the directions prescribed unto you, and continue to walk in the way which hitherto ye have followed, unto the end. This is pressed by Christs second coming, 1. To let them know He was to come again. 2. To let them know, that at his second coming, He will reckon with His Churches according as they obey or disobey His directions. 3. To teach all to walk so in making use of the Word, especially in corrupt times, as they may with confidence appear and reckon for the same before Jesus Christ at His second coming. 4. To shew, That Believers ought to set no other term to their persevering in duty, but Christs second coming.

From what is past we may observe 1. That in these Epistles, express difference is made between Ministers and People: *to you I say*, relateth to the Ministers, and, *to the rest*, relateth to the Members of that Church. And therefore in the application of things contained in them, we would distinguish them also.

2. That by *Angel*, in the Inscription, is understood Ministers collectively: *to you*, is in the plural number; and yet it's to these that the Epistle was directed under the name of *Angel*, in the singular: and therefore are they contradiistinguished from the *rest*, which looketh to the Members of that Church, *you* and the *rest* being the same thing here upon the matter, that *Angel* and *Church* were in the Inscription; save, that the *rest*, even as *many*, &c. distinguisheth the pure Members from

the impure, the Church comprehending both.

3. That a Ministers guilt, or the guilt of Officers in not excluding scandalous persons from Church-communion, doth not lye on the people, as upon the Ministers: therefore the duty common to the Ministers and people, is commended to both, whereas that reproof was peculiar to the Ministers: and, the *rest*, are taken in only in the mitigation or consolation; but it was, *Thou sufferest*, in the reproof.

4. Christ thinketh much of zealous executing of Discipline, and would not have Ministers sparing it against Hereticks or corrupt Teachers, more than other scandalous persons: yea, the reasons from the hazard of infecting the Flock, and the examples of it in Scripture, are most pressing in reference to them.

5. Here also we may see, That there is a Church-power and Authority, distinct from what is civil; and censures to be inflicted by Church-officers on scandalous persons, even where Magistrates are Heathen.

6. That delusion may come to a great height: As, 1. That a woman Preacheth. 2. That she calleth her self a Prophetess. 3. That she seduceth Christs Servants, and they are seduced by her. 4. That this is immediatly after Christ, while *John* the beloved Disciple liveth. 5. That all these Errors and abominations are covered with the title of mysteries and depths: what may we expect in our times, when such was the lot of those who lived at that time?

7. The writings even of the Apostle *John*, could not prevail so far as to make them renounce and abandon them.

8. See here, how Christ accounteth of Members of a visible Church: He fileth such as were seduced to adultery and Error, *His Servants*: and they were Servants still, who were seduced; and are afterward threatened, as *Jezebel* is. Whereby it appeareth, that these Titles go more upon the relation, that Church-members stand in, and the obligation that lieth on them, than upon the qualifications that are always to be found in them.

9. Our Lord Jesus, is no approver nor countenancer of separation from a true Church, for the faults of some Members in it: neither do faults in some Members, and defects in Ministers and Officers in executing Discipline, pollute the Ordinances in themselves, or to others, who are free of that guilt: and to do not necessitate a separation from such a Church, or any Ordinance thereof: for, this, and the former Epistle, being compared together, these things are clear, 1. That there were gross Members in the Church, *Adulterers, Nicolaitans, Seducers, &c.* 2. That they were continued in Church-communion; *thou hast them and sufferest them*, clearly import this: for, that Angel no otherways had them, but as Church-members under His charge. 3. That this Angel sinfully permitted them to continue Church-members: and therefore is reprov'd.

Yet, we conceive also, it's clear in matter of fact, 1. That many who were free, continued in Church-fellowship with this Angel, in that Church, notwithstanding thereof; so, the words *to you*, and *to the rest*, as of that same Membership, import, it being but one Church. And 2. That our Lord did not reprove them for their so continuing, even when He reprov'd the Angel for his fault of being defective as to his censuring of *Jezebel*. Yea, 3. that He approveth their not separating, in His approving the general strain of their carriage, which could not otherways be approved, this being so obvious to view, if it had been a fault, or if they had by it partaken with them in their sin. 4. That our Lord warranteth them to continue so; and layeth no burden of separating from them, on these who were honest: only faith He, *Hold fast that which ye have already till I come*, that is, keep your selves according to the rule given unto you and according to your present practice.

Hence may be argued, 1. If where Church-members are polluted,

lured, and suffered notwithstanding by Church-officers to remain in Church-communion, Christ doth not onely, nor condemn the clean for keeping fellowship with them; but expressly requireth them to continue, as they did, Then He alloweth not separation on that account: But the first is truth: He condemneth them not, but requireth them to *hold fast till he come*. *Ergo, &c.* 2. If Christ lay upon Members no other burden, but to keep themselves from personal pollution, Then He layeth not on them separation: (and it must be a burden not of His laying on) But the former is true; *Hold fast that which ye have already*. *Ergo, &c.* 3. If separation thwart with Christs direction to a Church in that condition, Then it's not a duty: But if the honest Members in *Thyatira* had separated, they had not held fast what they had already, but would have gripped to some new thing, and so have thwarted with the direction laid on them. *Ergo, &c.* 4. If this direction containeth all their duty in reference to that defection, or these polluted Members, Then separation is not a duty in such a case: for, it's inconsistent with it. But this containeth all, 1. Otherways it would not besit their case: which to do, is Christs scope. 2. It's not only negative, nor condemning them for not separating; nor onely positive, giving them other directions inconsistent with it; but it's exclusive, *I lay on you no other burden*, this, and *no other*. And though other particular duties may be alleged to be comprehended under this general; yet separation cannot be comprehended: because it's inconsistent with it, as appeareth: For, if the thing that Christ calleth for from these who were honest in *Thyatira*, be such a thing as was consistent with their former practice of keeping Church-fellowship with such, Then separation must be inconsistent with it; But the former is truth; and appears thus: If Christs direction to them be, to hold as they were, and not to alter, Then certainly it is consistent with their own former practice: But the words are plain, *I lay on you*, to wit, that are clean, *no other burden*, but abstain from their way, and *hold fast*. And certainly it would look very strange, to say, that separation from them were commanded under that word, *hold fast*, &c. And that so, *hold fast*, were to be expounded, *separate from that society*; and yet that must be comprehended under this, or it's not a duty for such a case.

Beside, This duty which Christ commends to them, is a duty which every one of them ought personally to go about, though others did not. And if separation were included here, according to that ground, it would infer many absurdities, as, first, suppose the Minister to continue defective in his duty, are all the pure members to separate from him? Or, Secondly, Suppose none but two or three did lay that duty to heart, were these two or three to separate from all fellowship with the rest, and quit all publick Ordinances? yet, no question, in such a case they were to hold fast what they had already. Thirdly, Suppose the pure members to continue in fellowship with their Officers that were thus defective as formerly they have done; yet keeping themselves clean in their own stations, can it be thought that they disobeyed this direction of Christ, *That which thou hast already, hold fast till I come*? Or, Is it not rather to be thought that they did more nearly conform to Christs direction by so doing, than if they had withdrawn, and separated?

We may also argue against separation in such a case, from this Scripture, thus: If separation be an other burden to Christs Church than what He laid upon *Thyatira*, *Pergamos*, &c. in such a case when their officers were defective in executing Discipline, Then it is not to be allowed in the Church of Christ afterward in such like cases; But the former is true. Therefore, &c. If these two things be clear, this Argument will be clear, 1. That though these Churches were in such a case, yet there was not separation from the Ordinances in practice or

exercise amongst them upon that account; This, we suppose, is clear from what is said. 2. If this also be clear that the pressing of separation upon such a ground, will prove a burden unto the people of God: Then it will follow, that Christ doth not lay it on upon these Churches, seeing He expressly signifieth that He intends to lay no other burden upon them, but to hold fast what they had already. It must therefore be an untender thing to burden honest souls with the apprehension of being polluted from the personal faults of joynt-Worshippers or Communicants: for, first, this putteth them to try all that they so keep fellowship with: and they cannot have peace, except they have some confidence that others, by their joynt-Communicating, do not pollute the Ordinances: and this confidence cannot be, till sufficient tryal be made thereof; and yet Believers find it sufficiently difficult to try themselves. 2. It putteth them to an utter uncertainty, in respect of any comfortable fruit of Ordinances: because so, it hangs not onely upon their own frame and good condition; but also upon the good frame and disposition of these that Communicate joyntly with them. And so, supposing that a Believer may be out of the present exercise of grace, and a joynt-Communicater with them; in that case, the Ordinance is polluted unto them, because they are polluted even to that Believer that is in such a case. And, can any have confidence that no natural person, or indisposed Believer hath Communicated with them? Neither will it remove this difficulty, to say, that men may have peace, if the offences or indispositions of others be not known unto them: For, 1. What if it be said, if tryal had been made, they might have been known? 2. Suppose it were not possible to know them; yet if the Communicating of corrupt men did not onely pollute the Ordinance to themselves, but also pollute it in it self, that is, make it want the nature of such an Ordinance as to others; Then, whether it were known or not, the Ordinance were no Ordinance, because of its being polluted in something essential to the being thereof: otherwise, the same Ordinance might be an Ordinance to one who knew not of such scandals; and not be an Ordinance of Christ to another, who knew such things, though it may be, in his own particular case, no less gracious, and lively than the other: for, it cannot be our knowing that such a person is scandalous that Communicates with us, that can pollute the Ordinance to us, except upon supposition that the being of such a thing did pollute the Ordinance in it self before we knew the same. 3. If this ground were laid, it might be a scruple to a tender Believer to Communicate with him self, to say so: for, he hath corruption in him; and it will be hard to say, that the corruption of others, will have more influence to pollute an Ordinance to him, than his own can have: especially considering, that he is most thoroughly acquainted therewith: and it will be as hard to say, that Christs call doth warrand a Believer to Communicate with peace, notwithstanding of his own seen corruptions; and yet that that same call will not warrand him to Communicate with peace, if he be in his own duty and frame approveable, notwithstanding of the corruptions of others. All which, being grievous burdens, cannot be supposed to agree with our Lords scope in this place.

Hence also we may see, that Christ doth not rigidly cast off Churches, for defects in Discipline, and grossness of particular members, when in the main, the foundation is kept: and though the Lord never look on these but as faults, and as reproveable where they are, as we may see in many of these Epistles; yet, to allow separation from a Church, because of these, and to account it no Church, is with Him all one, as when He calleth His people from *Babel*, Chap. 18.

We come now to the Conclusion of the Epistle, which is contained in the 26, 27, 28, and 29. verses. Wherein, 1. Some promises are laid down, in the first three verses; and the com-



mon advertisement, is repeated in the last verse, as is usual in the rest of the Epistles. The object of the promises, is the same, to wit, the *overcomer*: onely here, he is described by an other property, which interpreteth that general, to wit, *he keepeth my works unto the end*, that is, one who in the sincere practice of Religion hath ceased from his own works (as it is *Heb. 4. 10.*) and hath given up himself to live to Me, as it is, *2 Cor. 5. 15.* that is, to have My glory for his end, and My Will for his rule; and doth continue to prosecute that end according to that rule, notwithstanding of all difficulties to the end. This is the *Overcomer*, and the person to whom all these promises of being admitted to Heaven are made, and who may expect the same.

There are two excellent promises made to such a person in these words. 1. *To him will I give power over the Nations*: which doth indeed speak out an excellent Dominion, but no earthly Dominion: For, 1. This promise is to be performed after the full victory. 2. All overcomers are not capable of temporal Power over the Nations. It imports then these two. First, an excellent Dominion that the Believer may expect. Secondly, a joynt sharing in Christs Conquest over the Nations: in which respect, it is said, *1 Cor. 6. They shall judge Angels and all the wicked in the day of judgement.* This Dominion is two wayes amplified, *vers. 27.* First, In respect of the absoluteness thereof over all the wicked, they shall be bruised with a rod of iron, as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: this is a figurative expression, tending to set forth this, that though often Believers are now oppressed by the wicked of the world; yet the day is coming, when it shall be otherwise: Believers shall not onely be free from their oppressions; but shall be as absolute Kings, having Dominion over them in the morning, as it is, *Psal. 49. 14.* when the condition of the wicked in Gods Justice shall be most miserable. The second way how it's amplified, is, *even as I received of my Father*: which respecteth, 1. The thing given, they are made joynt partakers of that which Christ receiveth. 2. It respecteth the security whereby it's given; and so I will give him power, even as I received of my Father, imports that the Believers Dominion shall be no less sure unto him by Christs gift, than Christs Dominion is sure unto Him by the Fathers conferring the same upon Him.

The second promise, is, *and I will give him the morning star*: by the *morning star*, is understood Christ Himself, as He Himself expounds it, *Chap. 22. vers. 16. I am the bright and morning Star*, so it is, I will give him my self. The first promise was much, but this is more: and though heaven be much when

it is promised; yet this promise containeth more: for He that built the house, is of more worth than the house. Christ is called the *morning Star*, for these reasons, 1. Because the *morning Star* is most eminent amongst the Stars; so is Christ amongst the Sons, *Can. 2. 3.* He hath an eminency beyond all other consolations whatsoever. 2. He is called the *morning Star*, because when He is bestowed upon any, the dark night of their former miserable and disconsolate condition is put to an end, as the *Day-star* putteth an end to the preceeding night. 3. Christ brings in the *Day-Spring* from on high unto the soul who receiveth Him: and never was the *Day-star* so refreshful to a Traveller wearied with the darkness of the night, as Christ will be to the wrestler, who is longing to have the *Day-star* arising in his heart, *2 Pet. 1. 19.* And although these be hints, to shadow out the excellency of Christ, yet the truth is, neither *Day-star*, nor *Sun*, nor *Moon*, nor all the Stars put together, can sufficiently resemble His worth and lovely beauty, and refreshful seasonableness to a soul, when He manifesteth Himself to it.

If it be asked, why Christ promiseth to give Himself to the *overcomer*, and under that name? *Ans.* It is for these reasons, 1. Because there is no other thing that can be absolutely satisfying to the Believer, but Christ himself: and seeing Christ aimeth at the satisfaction of the Believer, this glorifieth His Grace and Love, that He will for that end bestow Himself upon them. 2. It is, to teach them where to expect their happiness when this life is ended, and so where to seek it while they are here: this is not to be had in, and amongst creatures, but is to be sought and looked for in Christ Jesus Himself. 3. It is done to comfort and encourage the Believer: for when Christ bestoweth Himself upon him, what will He not else communicate to him that may be for his good? as the Apostle reasoneth to this purpose, *Rom. 8. 32.* Believers may be encouraged to wrestle a while; this night will have an end, and the *Day-star* will arise: after which, there shall be no more night, nor darkness, nor *Sun* to give light, but the Lord God shall enlighten them, and the Lamb Himself shall be a light unto them; for holding forth of this consolation, is Christ expressed by this name in this promise.

In the 29. *vers.* the Epistle closeth with the common advertisement, *He that hath an ear to hear, &c.* which is not done for the fashion; but is the Lords commending of what hath been said unto the consciences of the Hearers: because what is said, is said by the Spirit to the Churches; and it becometh well these who have ears to hear, to hear what is said by Him.

## LECTURE I.

### CHAP. III.

*Vers. 1.* **A**Nd unto the Angel of the Church in Sardis, write, These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

2. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

3. Remember therefore how thou hast received, and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

4. Thou

4. *Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.*

5. *He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his Angels.*

6. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.*

**T**His is the fifth Epistle, directed to the Church in *Sardis*. It hath the division that is common to the rest, to wit, there is; First, an Inscription, *vers. 1*. Secondly, the Body of the Epistle, *vers. 2, 3*, and 4. And Thirdly, A Conclusion, *vers. 5*, and 6.

The party unto whom it is directed, is the *Angel of the Church of Sardis*: this was spoken of, *Chap. 1. vers. 11*. It was once the seat of the rich King *Crius*, abounding in much wealth, and also in much sin, and profanity; yet Christ by His Gospel begetteth a Church in this place. Although it be directed in common to Ministers and People, and for that end doth contain what respecteth the Church in common; yet we conceive it doth especially and principally relate to the case of the Minister, and to the People as joyned and agreeing with him in that dead condition, as the Exposition thereof will clear.

The person from whom the Epistle is sent, is set forth by two titles, First, *He hath the seven Spirits of God*: this was expounded, *Chap. 1. vers. 4*. and it is again repeated, *Chap. 4. vers. 5*, and 6. By these *seven Spirits* are understood the holy Ghost, in His several Gifts, Graces, and Operations. Christ is said to have these: because He hath committed unto him the dispensing of these Gifts and Graces of the Spirit to the Church, and doth joyntly with the Father, send the Holy Ghost the Comforter for the good of His People, as is clear from *Joh. 14. vers. 16, 17*. and *Chap. 16. vers. 7, 8*, &c. and many other places. He taketh this title in this place: because having to do with a dead Minister and People, He would both make them know what must quicken them, to wit, the Spirit; and how they may attain the same, to wit, by Him. It is no little part of Christs glory, nor of the Believers consolation, that Christ hath the dispensing of life, and liveness unto His People. The second title, is, *which hath the seven Stars*: this is in part taken out of *Chap. 1. vers. 16*. where Christ is described as having in His hand seven Stars.

By Stars are here understood Ministers, as *Chap. 1. vers. 20*. is clear. Christ is here said to have them, as He hath the seven Spirits: which doth import, 1. His special interest in, and title to Ministers: He hath a peculiar right to the Church beside what He hath to the World; yet hath He a more peculiar right to the Ministers, as having their Commission from Him, and dependance on Him, in a more special manner. Therefore, *Psal. 68. vers. 18*. He is said after His Ascension peculiarly to have received Gifts for men, or in the man: And yet these Gifts, are no other but the Gifts of Apostles, Pastors and Teachers, &c. which He again giveth to His Church, as is clear from *Ephes. 4. vers. 8*. and 11. Secondly, This title importeth Christs absolute Sovereignty over His Ministers in a special manner; for, *he hath them*: And so they being His, He may dispose of them at His pleasure, for furthering of them in His work if they be faithful; and for blasting of them if it be otherwise. Thirdly, It points at Christs care of His Ministers, who doth in a special manner keep and preserve these Stars, as something that is much esteemed of by Him. Christ taketh this title unto Himself in this Epistle, 1. That He may provoke this lifeless Angel, to seek life in Him, seeing He who had the seven Stars, had also the seven Spirits; and so especially they, to wit, His

Ministers might expect to be made lively by Him, if He were improved by them, and so this title doth back the directions that follow. 2. It is also to let them know that are Ministers, that though they be in an eminent place; yet are they subject to Christ who is their Sovereign, and so ought to be dependant on Him, otherwise they are lyable to His tryal and censure, who can dispose of them as He will: and so this title addeth weight to the threatening, which is contained, *vers. 3*.

The Body of the Epistle followeth in the close of the first verse, with the 2, 3, and 4. We may take it up in these four, First, The Lord discovereth the hypocrisy and deadness of this Minister and Church, *ver. 1*. Secondly, He proposeth many directions as remedies fit for their recovery. Thirdly, He presseth the practice of these directions by several weighty reasons and threatnings; and these two are intermixed, *vers. 2, 3*. Fourthly, There is a qualification of this charge, and a consolation in reference to some Members that were free from this challenge; and this is held forth, *ver. 4*.

The case of this Minister and Church, is, in two expressions, 1. Setting out what they were thought of by others. 2. Expressing what indeed they were before God. Before others they had a name *that they were living*, that is, they were thought to be in some good and lively condition more than ordinary, and were thought by others about them to be a Church, in better condition than other Churches: for, *to have a name*, doth import the esteem of somewhat in her, which was not ordinary; yet saith the Lord, notwithstanding of that name *they were dead*, that is, very unfutable to that they were esteemed to be, and in respect thereof, indeed but spiritually dead. By this deadness we understand, First, A simple deadness in hypocrisy, and so it is to be understood, there are but many of you meer hypocrites, although ye have a fair shew. Secondly, Deadness may be understood comparatively, that is, either in respect of what they seemed to be, and were thought to be by others, or what they ought to have been; or, in respect of what sometimes they had been. And so even Believers may be thus charged, who having some life, yet in these respects were defective. And by considering what is said, *v. 2*. where somethings *ready to die*, are spoken of, it will appear that this charge is so to be applied in reference to declining believers in part, as to others who were altogether hypocrites. It is like this Church hath been free of gross Errors, for there is no mention of the *Nicolaitans* in the same as in other Churches: It is like also there hath been no inward division amongst themselves, or gross profanity of practice, or such like: for there is no mention of such in the reproof, nor would such have stood with an eminent name; but on the contrary, it is like they had Ordinances in frequency and purity, the Minister had Gifts in some eminency, external subjection was given to the Ordinances, and they were waited upon, and, it may be, there was zeal in outward Reformation, as was in *Ephesus*. Upon these, and the like grounds, they came to be esteemed of by others, as being in excellent frame; the Preachers were thought excellent Preachers, and no Church thought more happy than the Church of *Sardis*; and it is like, it was counted a blessed thing to live in such a place: and, it may be, that the Minister and People had their own too great esteem of themselves, as being



being privileged beyond others, because they were free both of the errors in Doctrine, defects in Discipline, and also of the crosses and trials, which we find other Churches lying under: whereupon they are said to have a name; yet they were indeed, and before the Lord, in the respects formerly mentioned, dead, and unanswerable to that name: which is indeed a sad charge, and a most dangerous condition. Whence we may observe, That a Church, or Minister, or a particular person, may have a great esteem from others, and also have much esteem of themselves, and have some seeming grounds for the same; and yet either totally, or in part, and comparatively, be but dead and lifeless; and in no such estimation before God. This may make all, both Ministers and People, to tremble, and to beware of being pleased with frothy and empty names, which oftentimes are found to be exceeding light before God.

It may be enquired on this occasion, 1. as to a private person, what grounds one may have to account himself living, when yet indeed he may be dead? For answer, We conceive that the Lord in His wisdom hath made a peremptory decision of this Question to be impossible, to wit, how great length an hypocrite may go, and yet be still in the state of hypocrisy; as also of that other, to wit, how far a Believer may decline in the estate of Grace, and yet continue to be a Believer? because the deciding of these, as to the *maximum* or *minimum quod sit*, doth not tend to edification: And He would have His People keeping a distance, even from the borders and marches of these things in their practices. Yet we conceive, that it is clear from Scripture, that a hypocrite may have very many things that may be the occasion of a name to him; and yet really he may be still unsound. We may, for example, instance them in these particulars; 1. If we look to negatives, they may be justly chargeable with nothing before men, either as to omissions or commissions: and in this respect Paul was *blameless*, even while a Pharisee, *Phil. 3. 6.* 2. If we look to the common gifts of the Spirit, which come under that name of *Gratia gratis data*, they may come a great length here, as to speak with tongues, to understand all Mysteries, to have all knowledge, *1 Cor. 13. 2.* And in this respect they may Preach well, Write well, Dispute well; yea, even to the edification of others: and as to the exercising of a gift, Pray well also. And no question, Judas and others, whom the Lord will not own for His in the day of Judgement, were eminent in all these, as they were for casting out of devils and the working of miracles. 3. If we will look to the performance of external duties, it will be found they may come a great length in this respect. That Pharisee, *Luke 18. 11, 12.* prayed and fasted often, and gave tithes of all: and that man, *Matth. 19. 20.* said, *All these things did I keep from my youth:* which might be true, as to the outward performance of duties, and so as they understood them; which also is confirmed from the example of Paul. 4. If we look in to the spiritual meaning of the Law, as it doth oblige the inward man to a conformity thereto, we will find that hypocrites may go a length even in that: thus we find a discreet Scribe (*Mark 12. 32, 33.*) acknowledging, that to love the Lord with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, with all the strength, and to love our neighbour as our self, is more than all burnt offerings or sacrifices. This is indeed much, to prefer internal moral duties to external ceremonial performances; and is more than usually was acknowledged amongst them: for which cause, the Lord saith in the next word, *Thou art not far from the kingdom of God;* yet He insinuateth he was not in the Kingdom of God, and so not really sound notwithstanding. 5. They will sometimes have seeming fruits, even as to suffering; although no hypocrite can have a sincere end therein; yet it is clear, that many of them may suffer many things materially for the Truth of Christ. The Apostle, *1 Cor. 13.* supposeth that one may give his body to be burnt, and yet want love: and *Gal. 3. 4.* he supposeth that there

may be much suffering in vain. And certainly experience in all ages of the Church, hath made this appear to be truth. 6. If we look further in reference to Gospel duties, there may be fair flourishing in this respect also; as first, convictions of sin may be carried on a great length: Saul was often brought to say, *I have sinned;* Felix trembleth while Paul preacheth to him, *Act. 24. 25.* and even Simon Magus is brought to desire the help of Petrus prayers, as being convinced of his hazard, *Act. 8. 24.* Secondly, This conviction may be followed with something like Repentance, and sorrow for the committing of sin; thus, even Abab humbleth himself, *1 Kings 21. vers. 27, 29.* and these that are mentioned, *Psal. 78. vers. 34. &c.* did seek and inquire after him who slew them. And certainly there wants not sorrow and bitterness in Judas his repentance, *Matt. 26. 3. &c.* when he did really rewe what he had done. Thirdly, There may be also something like faith; whereby one may in part be brought to believe the general truths of the Gospel concerning Christ, &c. and to his own apprehension be persuaded in himself, that he hath received him; and to carry within himself, as if indeed there were ground to expect what is promised in him. This is clear also from the many instances of historical and temporal faith, that are recorded in Scripture: and in this respect, it is said of the temporary Believer, *That anon he receiveth the word with joy, and goeth forth as if all were well.* Thus Agrippa, is by the force of the Word almost persuaded to be a Christian, *Act. 26. 28.* and *Isai. 48. 1.* and 2. some are said to call themselves of the holy city; and stay themselves on the Lord God of Israel (which supposeth an exercise of faith, at least in their account) and yet, it was not done in truth and in righteousness. In the seventh place, we may instance it in the common operations of the spirit on the affections within: we have already hinted something of convictions for sin, of fear, of wrath, and destruction of the soul, which certainly may sometimes affect many hypocrites; also of grief and worldly sorrow, which may seize upon such, and in an high degree; who yet may have nothing of God in them: upon the other side, there may be much of it also in respect of the flashes of joy, tenderness, and meltings of heart, which hypocrites may have at one time, either in some publick Ordinances, or possibly in secret, or otherwise, more than at other times; and yet there be nothing but the common operations of the spirit, such as were in many of Johns Hearers, who for a season rejoiced in his light, *Joh. 5. 35.* and in the temporary Believer, as was formerly cited: for, the Lord that dispenseth the common gifts of the Spirit as He pleaseth doth also dispense of these common effects of the Spirits operation, such as liberty, fear, joy, sorrow, and the like, according to his Sovereign pleasure, without respect to the eternal state, good or bad of the person on whom He bestoweth them. Now seeing these things and such like may be where yet sincerity is not, what wonder is there that a person be said to have a name by others, or be thought to have reality by himself, when yet indeed there is nothing but deadness? Oftentimes men (that are ordinarily admirers of themselves and what is in themselves) are brought to think highly of themselves, and of the sincerity of their own state, and that with great persuasion, upon less grounds than these that are laid down, as we will find in the Epistle to Laodicea.

If it be asked, (supposing such things to be,) what can further be defective to reality?

Ans. To say no more, all these things may be, and yet there may be defect in these three, which are simply necessary for the differencing of a sincere person from an hypocrite. First, There may be a want of the new nature, and the person not yet be born again, as it is, *Joh. 3. 3.* Secondly, All these may be, and yet the person not be brought really to deny his own righteousness, and positively to receive Christ offered in the Gospel, and to rest upon Him, for the attaining of life through His righteousness.

ness and satisfaction: although they may be convinced it is good to do it, and although they may think they have done it, (being blinded by their own pride) and although they may some way comfort themselves as if they had done it in this their presumptuous dream; yet, really it is never done: for so, they could not but be saved, because of the immutable terms of Gods Covenant, which say, *whoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.* Thirdly, All these things may be, when yet there is defect in the nature of the inward duties (to say so) and in the manner of performing what is outward, that is, they may be both without the qualifications required to the constituting of sincerity and sincere acts (spoken to, *Corp. 2.* So that still these fruits, are but fruits of the old tree and  *flesh*, and are not brought forth by faith in Jesus Christ, without which nothing can be pleasing to God; neither is His glory singly aimed at in them, &c. without which the most glancing fruits, will be but rotten before the Lord.

Again, Secondly, considering this, *Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead*, with respect to the Minister: it may be enquired, 1. What kind of Minister this is, who may be said to have a name that he liveth, and is dead, 2. What may be the reasons that make even Ministers to rest satisfied in the applause of others, and in such things as may gain an approbation before men, without that which may make him approveable before God?

To the first, we say, that in the describing of such a Minister, we must, 1. look to some things which he hath, that give the ground of his having a name. And, 2. to something which he hath not, the want whereof, proveth him to have no more but a name. First then, A Minister may be in his particular condition such an one as was formerly described with many commendable things in his outward carriage. Secondly, he may have some good measure of gifts, and a pleasing quickness and dexterity in Preaching and managing of other duties that belong to his Calling. This gift it seemeth was in many Church-officers at *Corinth*, which made them appear exceeding eminent. Thirdly, he may have a frequency, and accurate formality in the discharge of all duties, as bearing forth much diligence and faithfulness in the discharge of them, with a seeming fervour and earnestness. It is like that these who preached Christ out of envy, *Philip. 1. 15.* wanted not a good measure of this. Fourthly, he may have a great plausibleness, and a familiar kind of humanity, and discretion (to speak so) in his conversation with others, which often tendeth to gain applause from them, as if it were a special sign of humility, and an evidence of love and respect, whereby men oftentimes are engaged to esteem of such a Minister, more upon such an account, to wit, as being particularly friendly to them, than for their works sake, as the word is, *1 Thes. 5. 13.* It is like, that these false Teachers that got such a name, as, *who but they*, in *Corinth* and *Galatia*, had much of this way of insinuation: and also these mentioned, *Philip. 1.* cannot well be thought to be free in this respect, seeing they Preached Christ out of envy and strife, *vers. 15.* as minding to gain a name thereby beyond *Paul*. Fifthly, Such a Minister may also have seeming countenance in his Ministry with Authority and respect amongst his people, and seeming countenance and fruit in outward things, as in the bearing down of Error, the suppressing of gross scandals and out-breakings, and the bringing of his people to some conformity in publick and private duties: in which respects, his Congregation may be more formal than many others. Upon these and such like considerations, a Minister may have a name of a very eminent and excellent Minister; and yet there may be much unsoundness in two respects. 1. As to his own personal condition, he may be without life, or at the best without liveliness in any suitable degree. 2. As to his publick Ministry, he may be in many things defective as to the sincerity of

his practice before God, even when he appeareth to be sound and diligent before men, as it is here, *vers. 2. I have not found thy works perfect before God.* Where we shal consider this more particularly: and do therefore now leave this first Question.

The second Question, is, *what may make a Minister so ready to please himself in the having of Gifts, and a name before others, when yet he may be so faulty before God?*

Ans. The deceits of mens hearts are very deep: and although it be exceedingly to be regrated that Ministers should fall in this evil of resting in the applause of others, when in the mean time they want Gods approbation in a great part at least; yet it cannot be denied to be a truth: and what is written to the Angels of *Ephesus*, *Sardis*, and *Laodicea*, doth abundantly confirm the same: and these reasons may be given thereof, 1. Because oftentimes Ministers, especially such Ministers aim too much at the pleasing of men, and at the gaining of respect and applause amongst them: this may be a temptation to the most sincere, but it is really that which unsound men are swayed with, as it is clear, *Philip. 2. 21.* and therefore when what they principally designed, is attained, it is no wonder that they rest therein. 2. Of all men in the world, Ministers are most obnoxious to this temptation of vanity, and seeking approbation from others; because, most of their appearances are in publick before others, and that in the exercise of some Gift of the mind, which is supposed to hold forth the inward worth of a person more than any other thing. Now, when this meeteth with applause, it holdeth out a peoples estimation of such a persons worth, which hath a great subtilty in its pleasing and tickling of him, and so is ready to incline him to rest satisfied therein. 3. Many Ministers are not travelling in birth to beget souls, and to have success as to the salvation of many, as well as outward fruits; but are at best studying to exoner themselves as having been diligent in their duty. Now, when such meet with applause from others, it is interpreted by them, as some confirmation of their diligence and seal of their exoneration in their Ministry: for, men being naturally willing to absolve themselves, are easily inuoced to admit of any testimony, which may seem to confirm their own integrity. 4. Oftentimes Ministers take more pains in external duties of their Ministry that are obvious to the view of others, than they do in the inward secret duties of Christianity upon their own hearts, such as self-examination, the making of their own calling and election sure, the keeping of themselves in the love of God, the exercising of Faith, Repentance, &c. whereby it cometh to pass, that often that may be their regrate which is spoken, *Song 1. 6. They made me the keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard have I not kept.* And from this it is, that though their condition be exceeding defective before God; yet, they being unacquainted therewith, cannot be affected with the same. And no question, many Ministers have much carnal quietness in their Ministry, who could not entertain the same, if they knew how things were with them before God. 5. This evil also is incident to Ministers, and hath great influence upon the other, that their having such Gifts, seeming fruits and approbation before others, is oftentimes made use of to counterbalance; and beat down any challenge that may arise concerning their own unsoundness, as if all these were restinonies to the contrary: and so, as oftentimes outward prosperity doth, through mens corruption, beat down challenges in some private persons, which adversity doth waken up in others; so an outward prosperous Ministry (to say so) doth often smother many challenges of a mans inward unsoundness, which readily had been more taken notice of, had there not been such Gifts, outward countenance in external duties, and approbation from others. Hence we see, That as often the most tender Christian is under the Cross, so it is the most lively Minister who laboureth most under the sense of his own insufficiency and short-



short-coming in Gifts, who hath most grosse out-breakings in Errors, and profaniry weighing him amongst his people; who meeteth with most disrespect, and manifest disappointments among the people and such like; these are often blessed of God to keep such a person lively, when others without these do fix up and forget themselves. O but Ministers that have a name, and some seeming countenance in the exercise of their Gifts, great applause and acceptation amongst the people, had need to be humble and watchful, lest they be liable to this charge, *Thou hast a name that thou livest, but art dead!* And, no question, many inadvertently are slain by such things themselves, when they Preach to others.

We come now to the second thing in the Body of the Epistle, which is the directions that the Lord giveth both to Minister and people, for the recovering of them out of that condition, *vers. 2, 3.* And because the reasons whereby he presseth these directions, are intermixed, we shall speak to both in order as they ly. The directions are of two sorts. The first respecteth their present duty, and their carriage for the time to come, in reference to what might occur; the other respecteth what was past, and their carriage in reference to that. The first is in the *2. vers.* comprehended in two directions; both which implice their former guiltinesse. The first is, *be watchful*: which looketh both to watchfulness in the private duties of Christianity, and also to a more watchful sympathizing manner of going about the duties of the Ministry: which implieth, that what ever name they had before others, that yet really there was much deadnesse and security, unwatchfulness, and untendernesse in both these respects before God. The second direction is, *and strengthen the things that remain, which are ready to die*: By things that remain and are ready to die, may be understood, 1. Some remainders of the work of God in some that were honest, which being through carelesnesse and security exceedingly weakened and brought very low, were in hazard to die out, if not prevented: this respecteth especially these members who had declined from somewhat which once they had been at. And although, no question, there were many in that Church who never had any thing; yet it is no marvel that the Lord mould His directions with a special reference to such as had some honesty in them. 2. These words may be understood as peculiarly spoken to the Minister; And so the things that remain, &c. are some little stirrings amongst the People, as the fruits of his Ministry, which now are like to die out, because of his formal way of carrying of himself in his duty: or, it may look to the few honest ones, which were among them, who were not fed and nourished by him in their spiritual conditions, and so were like to starve, even when he was flourishing in the exercise of his gifts to the admiration of others. The direction, *and strengthen the things that remain*, must be expounded with respect to both these: and so with respect to the first, it saith they that ever had any thing of God, and now have taken a stand, had need warmly and tenderly to nourish and confirm that which is behind; that by the exercise of tendernesse, prayer, repentance, and other things that belong to the life of Religion, that spunk may be kept from dying out. With respect to the second, to wit, the Minister, it putteth him to a more careful, painful, and sympathizing way of looking to the Flock, and feeding them according to their several tempers, with what might be solide and nourishing to them; lest the blossoms of fruits, which he had in his Ministry, should evanish, and be blasted. And thus he is reprov'd for taking pains possibly in fitting his Sermons to the tastingsse of some curious and vain Hearers, by the bringing forth of high notions and great words, whereby himself might be accounted a great man; and that yet in the mean time there was no care had to provide food, or Physick for hungry and sick souls.

This part of the directions, is backed by two Arguments.

The first is implied in these words, *that are ready to die*: which is in sum, if ye that are Christians be not diligent and serious, and ye that are Ministers be not watchful and faithful, ye that are private Christians are in hazard to have any beginnings that are in you extinguished: which may be understood respectively, both of saving and common stirrings; and ye that are Ministers may have your Ministry blasted, if these directions be not followed. This doth not imply any uncertainty of the persevering of the truly Godly; But doth set out, First, the connexion which God hath made betwixt liveliness and diligence: And, Secondly it sheweth how God sometimes useth to stir up secure Believers, to wit, by giving and blessing to them some sharp warnings.

The second way by which he presseth these directions, is more expressly set down in the end of *vers. 2.* *For I have not found thy works perfect before God*: which is, in a word, what ever men think of them as before them; yet I, having tried them according as they are before God and in His sight, who seeth further than men, have not found them to be perfect before Him. This word in the Greek is *τελειωματα*, a word that is most ordinarily used in reference to Ministers, and setteth forth integrity and sincerity in their Ministrie, when they *fulfil* or *make full proof* of their Ministry, as it is, *2 Tim. 4. 5.* or when they *fully preach the Gospel* of Christ, as it is rendered, *Rom. 15. 19.* and in other places. Therefore here it would seem especially to relate to the defects of the Minister, even when he went about his Ministerial duties. And it importeth, 1. That Ministers ministerial duties ought to be perfect before God. 2. That the Lord Jesus will especially take notice of them and their ministerial duties. 3. It importeth this, that there are many Ministers who are very fair in their outward ministerial carriage before others, and cannot be liable to any charge before men; that yet, when Christ cometh to try them, and reckon with them, will be found exceeding defective before God. And on this occasion it is fit to consider, 1. What is necessarily requisite, according to this form of speech, that a Ministers works may be perfect before God. 2. What maketh a Minister, that may be abounding in external labours, yet to be liable to this charge, that his works are not perfect before God. And this will clear a Question, which we left imperfect in the first verse, and not so particularly answered,

To the first, that a Ministers works may be perfect before God: beside the frequency of them, and what may also be in his other personal carriage, these things will be found to be required by vertue of this expression, 1. That in publick ministerial duties a man be acted out of zeal to the glory of God and affection to the souls of these he Preacheth to: this was Pauls practice in his fulfilling of his Ministry, *Col. 1. 25.* (where the same word is) being compared with what goeth immediately before, and what followeth after. And this is the great commendation of Timothy beyond others, *Philip. 2. 20.* that he naturally cared for the state of the people, that is, he pursued their edification, as a Mother will seek the safety and good of her own child. This is a qualification of an high price before God, without which, no diligence will be esteemed of. 2. That a Ministers ministerial duties be thus perfect, it is requisite that in them he extend himself according to his ability to the utmost for the peoples edification. That is to *make full proof of the Ministry*, *2 Tim. 4. 5.* when nothing is left untrayed which may put a mans gifts, time, ability, &c. to the utmost, for the Peoples good; so that his design is seriously to improve all for that end. 3. There must not only be diligence and faithfulness in external duties; but there must also be a stableness to Gods minde, in the end, motives, and manner of performing these duties, and also tendernesse and faithfulness in the performing of such duties as are not obvious to men, to wit, praying for the People, sympathizing with them in strains, grieving when they are

are wounded, and the like, which we will find frequent in the practice of Paul. Now, when a Minister contenteth himself with the performing of such duties as are before men, and maketh no conscience of these, it looketh as if he aimed rather to be approved of men than of God: and therefore his works cannot be said to be perfect before Him. And to this belongeth a Ministers carrying of himself in Preaching, admonition, and every duty as in the sight of God. 2 Corinth. 2. 17. *For we are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.* 4. This perfection taketh in an earnestnesse and universality in all the duties of the Ministerie, and that in reference to all times and persons: so the Minister must reprove, threaten and carry displeasing messages, as well as instruct, comfort, and preach that which may be more pleasing. He must do this also in reference to great men as well as to these who are mean, as well to these whom he loveth, and who loveth him, as to others: and so he is to be searching the secret faults of Professors, to wit, their security, pride, hypocrisie, &c. as well as the grosse out-breakings of others. It is like, that this Angel was defective in this respect, and searched not in his Doctrine so as to make discovery of the hidden hypocrisie and corruption of hearts; and that he did not faithfully rip up their wounds, possibly fearing to to displease them: for, oftentimes he that seeketh to heal the wounds most smoothly, gaineth most applause from others. Now, where there is defect in these, no ministerial duties can ever be accounted perfect before God. When Paul is putting Timothy to make perfect, or full proof of his Ministerie, 2 Tim. 4. he thus proceedeth, *vers. 2. Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.* And so he describeth himself to the same purpose, Col. 1. 28, 29. *Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.*

From this now it will be easie to answer to the second, to wit, what defects in ministerial duties, may make them not to be accounted perfect before God: for, if the former four be necessary to make such works perfect, then when there is defect in these, or any of these, a Ministers works cannot but be found imperfect: and therefore we shall say no more of it.

The second sort of directions that some way relate to their former carriage, as well as to their present dutie, are set down, *vers. 3.* In them the Lord draweth them back to consider the time of their espousals (as it were) and the terms upon which they Contracted together; what He proposed to them, and what they received off His hand, when the Word came amongst them; that now themselves may see if they have been answerable to such Engagements and Resolutions; and if there be not reason to repent of their declinings. In general, this direction putteth them to a back-search of themselves: which is an excellent mean of recovery, either of Minister, or of People who have declined, as was cleared from the Epistle to Ephesus, Chap. 2. 5. But more particularly, there are four words holding forth their dutie. 1. Remember how thou received: this importeth, First, That there was an offer made to them of the Gospel. Secondly, That they had in profession received the same. Thirdly, When it is said, *how thou hast, &c.* in importeth some more than ordinary conviction, or warmnesse in that their professed subjection to the proposed Gospel. It is like, some of them were as John B. prills hearers were, *Joh. 5. 35.* rejoicing in that light for a season; but afterward becoming carnal and secure. And if there was any honesty, it was then more lively in exercise, than it continued to be thereafter: therefore saith the Lord, consider what hath become of that now, and if the present deadnesse be answerable to that tenderneesse; and so, upon that consideration, be provoked to study

more liveliness. The second word is, *how thou hast heard:* this is almost the same with the former, and looketh to the terms which God proposed to them when He took them to be a Church, and what was their purpose when they submitted thereunto. As if the Lord had said, did I propose to you only to take on a name without reality? or did ye engage only to be professors in shew, and not to be thoroughly sincere? See then how this condition of yours answereth my proposal, and your engagement. The third word is, *and hold fast:* which is not to be understood, as if he were well pleased with their present condition, as in the Epistles to Thyatira and Philadelphia: because here He giveth them many directions and burdens (to say so) besides this, which He doth not in the other two Epistles: But it doth imply these two, 1. A necessity of holding fast the little thing that was, lest they should run to the extremity of declining ere long. 2. It respecteth what they had received and heard: and so, the meaning is, that they would grip faster to hold that than formerly they had done. Under these directions we may gather what hath been their guiltiness, and the steps by which they have come to such an height in this hypocrisie and declining. The last word is, *Repent:* which is a general cure for all evils, and is of special use for the preventing, and removing of such inward evils, as, declining from any good condition, security, presumption, and hypocrisie, as we may see through all these Epistles. For readily it cannot be evil with the spiritual frame of a Christian when repentance is in exercise, and it cannot be well when it is otherwise. But of this shall say no more now.

The third thing in the Body of this Epistle, to wit, the way how the Lord presseth these exhortations in this *vers.* is by sub-joining a sharp threatening, *If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know:* this threatening is general; but it is the more comprehensive and sharp, If we consider these two, 1. That when He saith, *He will come, &c.* He doth not signifie any particular stroke He will bring on them, whereby they may gather, that there is no particular threatening; but it may be comprehended under this general: and so it may be, I will come unto thee and remove thy Candlestick, or fight against thee with the sword of my mouth, or call thee and thy people some extraordinary way to a reckoning, and such like. The sin of hypocrisie, especially in a Minister, is a most dreadful sin, and they who are guilty thereof, are in a most dreadful condition: for, their doom is blank, and God may fill therein all the threatnings that are in this Book, as it is in *Deut. 29. 20.* and *Rev. 22. 18.* And they themselves cannot tell how many evils they are liable unto at Christs coming upon them. 2. If we consider, that this coming of Christs, is no friendly coming to them; but as the coming of an enemy upon them, and that in some terrible manner, suddenly and unexpectedly surprizing them. And so it presseth them to the present exercise of Repentance, because the coming of the Lord would be dreadful unto them in that condition; and yet it was hard to know how suddenly they might be surprized by the same.

The fourth thing in the Body of the Epistle, is, the consolation laid down in reference to the handful that had some life: for, if they were but as two or three on the tops of the uttermost branches, the Lord will not neglect them. This consolation, *vers. 4.* hath three parts. 1. The persons are described to whom it is sent. 2. The consolation is laid down in a promise. 3. The reason is given, why the Lord putteth this difference betwixt them and others. The persons are several waves described, 1. They are said to be *some names:* this is according to the Scripture phrase, to shew their eminency and excellency beyond others, who by their integrity had, as it were, procured themselves a name in Christs account: so this phrase is understood, *Act. 1. 15.* to wit, not only it signifieth some persons simply,



Simply, but some persons that are eminent. 2. They are even in *Sardis*: and this commends their honesty, that had kept somewhat lively, even where Minister and People were dead. 3. They are a few names: which sheweth, that in comparison with the multitude of this Church, there were but few sincere Believers, at least in a lively condition, although outward things looked exceeding fair, which also heightens their commendation. 4. In the description it is said, *thou hast*, relating to the Angel: which saith, that a lifelesse Minister may have some lively persons under his charge; and yet he is little to be thanked for it. We conceive, that this doth not only respect the title which he hath to all that are members; but it seemeth to relate to a peculiar interest in these few beside others; and so they might be said to be *his*, as being begotten by his Ministrie: in which respect, he could not be said to have these who had no sincerity at all. 5. They are described by this, *That they have not defiled their garments*: which relateth not only to purity in outward practice; (for it is like that was not so rare a thing in *Sardis*) but especially it relateth to their inward liveliness and freedom from these evils, especially of security, formality, declining, hypocrisie, and such like, that were common in the place. And thus, to keep the garments, is often taken universally, as respecting mans inward condition, as well as that that is outward, and particularly, *chap. 16. vers. 15.*

The consolation it self, is in this promise, *they shall walk with me in white*: which hath a twofold consolation in it, 1. That they shall walk with Christ, and so enjoy his company and be made happy objectively by the possessing of His presence. 2. That in the enjoying of Christs company, they shall be clothed with white: which we take to hold forth the unconceivable Glory which shall be put upon the souls, and even the bodies also of Believers, when they shall be raised in Glory and bear the Image of the heavenly, *etc. 1 Cor. 15.* and shall be conformed to Christs glorious Body, *Philip. 3. 21.* and shall shine as the Sun in the firmament, *Mitth. 13.* It's called *white*, because then *there shall be no spot amongst all the Congregation of the firstborn.* 2. When Christ is on his conquest, *chap. 19.* he appeareth in white: and in this place, it is to shew forth the Believers absolute victory over all difficulties and enemies. 3. When Christ was transfigured, His garments did shine, so saith he here, that the Believer, who keepeth himself pure, shall walk in Christs livery, and, as it were, He shall give them new cloaths like unto His own; Thus shall they be subjectively happy.

The reason subjoynd, is in these words, *for they are worthy*: we may take up worthinesse under several considerations, as, first, when there is supposed to be in proper justice a condignity between the deserving of the person, and the thing that is bestowed upon him: as when a workman is said to be worthy of his wages, speaking as amongst men: in this respect, *Scotus*, and many of the Schoolmen that follow him, denie that men can merit any thing before God: because there is such a distance between God and creatures, that no creature can make God his debtor, without respect to His own free engagement and promise: & also, because there is no due proportionableness between the great happiness of Eternal life, and what men can do to procure the same. This Doctrine is much opposed by the generality of the Schoolmen, and later Jesuites, as having these absurdities with it, 1. That it destroyeth all proper merit. 2. That it saith there is no condignity in good works themselves, without respect to Gods promise, whereas they say, such and such works had been condignly meritorious, although there had never been such a promise. 3. They say, it is all one with the Hereticks opinion, and such like: of which, possibly, we may say a word some-otherwise (if the Lord will) Yet, this first acceptation of worthinesse or merit, cannot be admitted here: because, 1. it contraires the end of Christs giving this promise, which is to expresse the freeness of His Grace in taking notice

of such, and bestowing such an excellent priviledge on them beyond their deserving. 2. It is contrary to what is implied in the promise: for, if they had absolute perfection for the time, so as to merit to be thus dealt with, Then it would suppose that they did already walk in white, and were simply free of all blots; whereas Christ doth difference their future happy condition from what they had for the time in this respect, that although then they wanted not their own infirmities, albeit they were sincere, and free of the faults that others were lying under; yet wanted they not all spots: but at that time, when this promise should be fulfilled, these spots should be wiped away, and they should walk fully in white. Secondly, *worth*, or merit, is sometimes taken as it respecteth Gods gracious acceptation of a sinner through Christ Jesus: and thus a believing sinner may be said to be worthy, and to have heaven bestowed upon him in Gods righteousness and faithfulness. 1. Because in Christ he is accepted as worthy: and so they may be said to be worthy in Him, as they are just and righteous in Him, that is, through the imputation of Christs worth and righteousness unto them: for, though it be said here, that *they are worthy*; yet it is not said that they are worthy in themselves. 2. In this respect, Believers may be said to be worthy; because God hath freely condescended to promise such things unto them: and therefore (to speak so) according to the terms of the Law of Grace, they may expect and claim the performance of such promises from the righteous Judge, who cannot in His justice but perform what He hath promised, as if there were a ty of strict justice by merit put upon Him. And this agreeth with the Apostles reasoning, *2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.* In the third place, often this word which is rendred *worthy* here, is to be understood of a meetnesse and suitability which is in such a thing, without respect to any merit or proper justice: thus it is rendred, *Mat. 3. 8. Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.* The word rendred *meet* there, is the same that is rendred *worthy* here, and importeth only that there ought to be a suitability in their fruits to true repentance. This will agree well to this place, as the scope clearly sheweth; The Lord saith, they kept themselves clean, when others were defiled: therefore they shall walk with me in white, when others shall be polluted: and the reason is subjoynd, it is suitable and meet it should be so, that these that difference themselves in keeping clean from the sins of others, should be by me brought to a condition where they shall have eternal & absolute whitenesse. And at the first view, it is clear, that that promise is conceived in these terms, so as it may carry in it a suitability to their present honest condition. And the Lord often useth this expression, both in His promises and threatnings, when He intendeth not to shew what is due in strict justice; but only, that there is and will be a suitability and proportionableness between mans carriage and His dealing with them, as we will after find, *chap. 16. v. 15, 16.* And this we rest in, as the meaning of the place, and as most clear from the scope thereof.

The Conclusion followeth: Wherein, 1. there are some encouragements given to the overcomer, *vers. 5.* and then the common advertisement, *vers. 6.* which is in all the other Epistles. There are three promises made to the overcomer. The first is, *the same shall be clothed in white raiment*: which is, upon the matter, that same which was promised to these few sincere Members that were in *Sardis*. And is here proposed, to shew, that not only these in *Sardis*, but all that shall faithfully wrestle and overcome, shall be made partakers of that excellent priviledge formerly mentioned: And yet I suppose none can say that all that shall be clothed in white, and admitted to heaven, are in strict and proper Justice worthy of the same; yet, upon the former Popish principles, this will follow, if so be the proper worthiness of these in *Sardis*, had been the thing that procured this priviledge unto them, to wit, to walk in white.

The second promise, is, *And I will not blot out his name out of the book of life.* The Book of Life is frequently mentioned in this Prophecy: and (God-willing) we may take occasion to speak somewhat of it, *chap. 20.* Only now we say, there are four Books figuratively attributed to God (to mention no more:) for, God hath neither need nor use of Books; but after the manner of men for helping us to take up His mind, He thus expresseth Himself. First, There is a Book that is more general, and comprehendeth His decrees: which in His ordinary providence He executeth in the World from time to time. In this respect, all His works are said to be known to Him from the beginning, as if He had had a particular rol of them all: and it is with respect to this, that *David (Psalm 139. vers. 16.)* saith, *Thine eyes did see my substance yet being imperfect, and in thy Book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.* A second Book, is, of Gods Omniscience: which taketh in all things past, present, and to come, as if He had kept a Diarie of every event, and had written up every word and action of men. In reference to this, the Books are said to be opened in the day of Judgement, *Rev. 20. 12.* A third Book, is of Gods special care of His Church: whereby, as it were, He hath set forth Himself to have a peculiar care and oversight of her, and what concerneth her. This is mentioned, *Chap. 3. vers. 1, &c.* A fourth Book, is called the Book of Life: which relateth only to the names of such as our Lord hath ordained to Glory, and doth import that they are as definitely and distinctly determined and known by Him, as if they were by name and surname particularly recorded in a Book. It is this Book, that is here called the *book of life*: Because, 1. The end thereof is to ordain so many to Life. And, 2. Because there is a immutable connexion betwixt being written in this Book of Life, and obtaining eternal life: and so, being the first and sure door that maketh entrance unto life possible and feasible, and gives the right to, and is the foundation of all that followeth; therefore deservedly it getteth this name to be called the *book of life*.

It rests then to consider, what it is *not to blot out his name out of the book of life*: It is not to be understood as if there were a scraping out, and putting in into that Book, posterior to Gods eternal and immutable decree: because, First, in that respect, it could not be called the Book of Life: for so, many might die who once were in it. Secondly, It is contrary also expressly to the end and use thereof in the day of Judgement, where (*Chap. 20. 12.*) expresse mention is made of the opening of this Book, for this end, that whoever were found from the beginning written therein, might be kepted from the lake that burneth with fire and brimston, as is said in the 15. verse of that Chapter, And if the connexion of being written in this Book, and the obtaining of life, were not peremptory, there could be no such reason of opening this Book in the day of Judgement. Thirdly, What ever this be, it is something to be performed after this life: and seeing it cannot be imagined that one can die with his name in this Book, and afterward have it blotted out: Therefore such a glosse cannot be put upon this place. And who would have further confirmation of this, may have it in the Learned *Gomarus* his digression on this very Text. The words then are to be understood thus, as importing more than they expresse, to wit, that in the day of Judgement Christ will own the overcomer, and present him before God, as one that was inrolled in the Book of Life, and given to Him in the bargain of Redemption, for this very end, that He might raise him up in the last day, and give unto him eternal life, as it is, *Joh. 6. 39, 40.*

That this is the meaning, will appear by considering the third promise, *But I will confesse his name before my Father,*

and before his Angels: which doth expressly hold forth what we assert of Christs solemn, and honourable owning of them as His and given to Him in the great Day, when all the holy Angels shall be present. We shall say nothing of the other part of the Conclusion, which is so often, but never needlessly repeated. Now, we may take some few Observations from the several parts of the Epistle, besides these that are already hinted.

*Observe,* 1. To have a name without reality, is an exceeding great evil; yet an evil incident both to Ministers and People. 2. These that have had once something, may through unwatchfulness be brought to a very low posture, as it were, to be ready instantly to expire. 3. Folks may have some extraordinary motions at sometimes, and yet afterwards fall from these, and forget them, as if they had never had such purposes and resolutions. 4. There may be some honest, where there is much deadness, even in the publick Ordinances; and God may keep some lively, even in such a place as *Sardis*, when the generality are dead, and this tendeth exceedingly to their commendation. 5. A Church may have a great name for many professors, and yet the number of the truly sincere may be very few. 6. Godliness is of great value where ever it is, if it were amongst never so few: it is like, Religion in power was not much thought of of in *Sardis*; yet what advantage will these few have, beyond others that were of the greatest name, when Christ shall come to Judgement? it will never be well understood what advantage there is in true Holiness beyond profanity and hypocrisy, till by Christs second coming this be manifested.

Beside these Observations and what hath been said, there are yet some few Questions tending to the further clearing of this Epistle; as First, If an unsound hypocritical man may be a sent Minister of Christ? Secondly, If such a man may have gifts in exercise; or, if even a Believer may have gifts in exercise when his grace is in no good condition? Thirdly, If such a Minister may have fruits? Fourthly, If usually such a Minister with his gifts hath many, or rather but few fruits? And lastly, if by his deadness the Ordinances be so polluted to others as they cannot without sin partake of the same with him? To which, we shall answer shortly in order, by laying down some Doctrines from the Text.

And to the first we say, that men that are unsound as to heart-honesty, may be *de facto* Ministers in the Church of Christ, and, while continuing such, ought to be so accounted: What this Angel was simply in respect of his state, we shall not determine; yet this is certain that although he had a name to be living, he was dead; and his works were not perfect before God, what ever they were before men. And comparing this with the condition of the Angel of *Laodicea* following, we conceive there is ground to say, that men that are for their own ease unsound, may yet be Ministers in Christs House; and are to be esteemed such, while they continue in that room, seeing our Lord Jesus doth so here. And this is not to plead for profane Ministers, as if by this they themselves might have peace in their discharge of Ministerial duties: or, as if others, whose place giveth them a hand in the admitting unto, or keeping in the Ministry, such as are, or may be discovered legally to be so, might from this have any defence; there will no such thing follow hence: But it is to plead for the Ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ought not to suffer derogation in whatsoever hands it be. Hence doth the Lord (*Matth. 23. 3, &c.*) recommend to His Hearers to give due ministerial respect to the Scribes and Pharisees, even when He is to discover their rottenness, that thereby the peoples derogating from the Lords Word in their mouth, while they sat in *Moses Chair* and spake truth might be prevented. Our Lords calling of *Judas* to be an Apostle doth evince this (for He knew what simply was necessary to a Minister) who, no question, in his Preaching, was to be ac-



counted an Ambassador of Christ with the rest : the reason is, because it is not Grace that intitleth one to that Charge, but Christ his Call and Commission: and seing it is certain that these may be separated, a Call from Grace, as Grace from a Call: It will follow therefore, that according to His Sovereignty He may make use of whom He will, who as He hath not choisen Holy sinlesse Angels, but sinful earthen Vessels, to commit that treasure of the Gospel unto, *that it might be known that the excellency of the power, is not of men, but of God*; so may He make use of sinful men, even more sinful than others, that it may be known that the edification of souls doth not necessarily depend on the holinesse of the Instrument, as *Act. 3. 12.* Therefore we will find, that many who have been untender, have had hand at this work, as *Matth. 7. 23.* *Many shall say we have prophesied in thy name, &c.* and *Philip. 1. 15.* *Some preach Christ out of envie,* and saith *Paul (Chap. 2. 21.)* almost of all, *they seek their own things.* This ought to make both Ministers and People to tremble, and to strive to be in at the strait gate of Holinesse, seing no place nor station, nor shining gift can change our nature, and exempt from the sentence of Christs curse in the last day: which use is made of it, *Matth. 7. 22, 23.*

In Answer to the second Question, We may see, that Gifts may be in exercise, where there is little or none of inward Grace, or a great decay thereof. This Angel hath a name and is thought of, even while dead: this may be in unregenerate men, as in the former instances; and also may be in good men respectively. It is like, *Jobs* friends, for as excellently as they spoke, yet had much defect as to the inward life. And *Solomon* remarketh of himself (*Eccles. 2.*) that his wisdom remained with him, even when his heart was bent upon vanity: Gifts are deceitful and deceiving both to men themselves and to others: Grace is another thing, and although som. times God will strike the Idol-shepherd in his right eye, and make even his Gifts to wither, thereby to shew the necessity of nearnesse with Him; yet sometimes will He continue the exercise of them, that thereby His sovereignty may appear, and that men may not lay too much weight on a common Gift, and also that the edification of others may be furthered.

To the third, we say, That a man whose particular condition is not approvable before God, may not only have gifts, and be called to be a Minister; but also he may have fruits, and some successe in his Ministrie: this Angel hath a few names, even in *Sardis*: and, no question, *Judas* in his Ministrie wanted not fruit, seing one report is made of all indifferently, *Mark 6. 30.* And the Preaching of Christ by the *Inviters (Philip. 1. 4.)* seemeth to have had successe: otherwise, their Preaching had been no great ground of rejoycing to *Paul.* This also is to shew the Lords sovereignty, who will make use of whom He will in His Work: and although saving Grace do not alwayes accompanie common gifts of the Spirit; yet are they given to profit *withal, 1 Corinth. 12. 7.* And seing they do not alwayes nor often profit these to whom they are given, and yet are not simplie unprofitable when they are some way improven, They must therefore profit others for whom they are given.

To the fourth, we say, That although such a Minister may not be altogether alwayes without fruit; yet often great Gifts with an unsound frame of heart have but little fruit and few converts: he hath here names, but a few names, though he himself had a great name: and certainly in part it is imputed to his unsoundnesse, whose works were not perfect before God; so that although men could not censure him; yet before God he was not kindly and natively driving the design of that peoples edification, whereof this, of having a few names, is a consequent, as the real honesty, though with a little measure of Gifts, of the Angel of *Philadelphia*, did not want its own in-

fluence upon the successe of his Ministrie: This therefore sheweth the danger of an unsound lifelesse Ministrie, that often the fruits are exceeding few, where there are any at all. Hence these Scribes and Pharisees are, in Christs account, as to fruit and to saving of souls, *Matth. 9.* as almost none at all, although he gave not people way at their own hand to cast at them. And considering, that turning of men from their evil way, and standing in Gods counsel, *Jer. 23. vers. 22.* and walking with God in equity, and turning many from their iniquity, *Mal. 2. vers. 6.* go together. It is no marvel that these who are negligent in the one, be also less blessed with the other. These, we conceive, God hath wisely linked together, that the more a man have of Him, the more fruit his Commission in his mouth should have. And although this be not peremptory in all cases, especially in the comparative degree amongst honest men; Yet, 1. this connexion is more suitable in it self, *vers. 12.* that one who tenderly and singly aimeth at fruit, should attain more than one who indeed intendeth but the feeding of himself. 2. The one hath a promise and may claim it, *1 Tim. 4. 16.* the other is judicially smitten in this: for, as fruits are in part some reward of Grace to a faithful Minister; so fruitlesse is a just stroak upon the other. 3. There is a connexion also in respect of means: tendernesse in a Minister disposeth to faithfulness, sympathie, &c. and the want of it, unfitteth a Minister to conceive experimentally of many things; and so he is indisposed to speak them seasonably: and it marreth that holy boldnesse, which immediate eyeing of God giveth; and by it, a Minister is incapacitated to deal in secret with God for the people and is apt to lay stumbling-blocks before them: and so, partly by wanting what he should have, and partly by being prone to foster their securitie, or riddle their wounds untenderly, or stumble them by his carriage, he, in these and many other respects, looketh as one not suited and fitted in an ordinary, at least a kindly way, for the begetting of many: so that whatever in some extraordinary cases the Lord may do; yet this is most usual: which should make people desire lively Ministers, and pray that they may be kept so; and also should make Ministers conscionably see to their own particular conditions, and that in reference to their Ministrie, lest by their declining in their own Spiritual estate, and their neglecting thereof, they have no lesse influence on the fruitlesse of their Ministrie, than by the direct neglecting of proper ministerial duties.

From this also we may gather, in answer to the last Question, That no personal corruption in joynt worshippers doth pollute any of the Lords Ordinances to another; or, on that account, necessitate a separation from them: for, if the corruption of any had such influence, then it were especially the corruption of Ministers; and if the corruption of Ministers did so, then it were not to be thought that the Lord would have such; even after their discovery, to be acknowledged still to be Ministers, which yet here and in the former instances is clear. The Word and Sacraments administred by such, if rightly received and improven, are owned by Him as His Word and Sacraments, as well as when administred by the most Holy, as from the considering of the forementioned instances may appear.

There are yet two particular Questions, which possibly may be desiderated by some, to which we shall speak a word before we leave this Epistle. The first is, by what symptoms a Minister may discern his own deadnesse while things seem to go well with him in publick? or, what may give him occasion to suspect himself to be under such a charge, as is given against this Angel here? The second is, What may be the means of a Ministers preventing of such a condition, or, of recovering himself therefrom when fallen into it?

To the first, we say, that even when things go well in publick before others, a Ministers works may yet be liable to this.

this charge of not being perfect before God : and, we conceive, upon search within, and reflection upon himself, may be discerned by these or such like symptoms, 1. When there is a decay or lifelessness in his own particular condition, that is, when there is no exercise of Repentance in himself as a Christian, nor freshness and tenderness in communion with God in secret prayer and other Christian duties : if in such a case he should preach as an Angel, yet cannot that be said to be perfect before God. 2. In such a frame, a Minister ordinarily is not kindly affected with the discharge of ministerial duties, nor with sympathy towards the People ; but he goeth lightly under the burden of these, almost indifferent what come of the fruit, if fairly and without any palpable discovery of his infirmity such duties be put by. 3. Upon this it followeth, that if there be acceptation of the thing amongst the people, there is but too much quietness in the Minister, without reflecting upon his own indisposition and unsoundness, and without being taken up with the desire of fruitfulness among the people. This is suspicious-like, when a Minister so acteth in ministerial duties, as if there were no more called-for, than the thoroughing of what is publick before men. 4. Something of this may be gathered from the scope and strain of his Doctrine, that is, if there be any secret aiming to commend himself by such Doctrine, or, if of its own nature it seem to tend more to that, than to edifie and feed the souls of Hearers. 5. If his own gift and present acceptation among the people be well satisfying to him, so as he be under little fear of sitting up, and if he be unfrequent and cold in addresses to God for liveliness and success : these and such like things look not well. 6. Somewhat may be perceived by Ministers inclination to converse with unferious untender men though they be civil ; and to keep up general discourses and questions with them, rather than to converse with such as are tender, and love to have their exercises and practical cases for the matter of their discourse : it cannot be well when it is so. 7. It is not right with a Minister, however it be in the exercise of his gift, when he is not walking under the impression of sinful defects, and unsingleness and want of zeal as to his end and manner of carrying on the most commendable-like duties : for as it is no good token in a private Christian to be without the impression of his own corruptions and sinful infirmities ; so it cannot be right with a Minister when his ministerial defects are not sensible to him : and when there is not an actual exercise with

the selfishness, carnalness, vanity, &c. that are in him, it's too like these have too much sway with them.

Now, to the second, to wit, What a Minister ought to do in such a case for recovering of himself? *Ans.* The reading of this Epistle seriously will indeed satisfy this : which we may draw out in these directions, 1. It's necessary that a Minister observe his own condition, and take notice of the sinfulness and hazard thereof : this is implied in the word *remember*, *vers.* 3. and indeed who cometh to ponder and consider rightly their own condition, are in a fair way of recovery. 2. There will be a putting of every thing right that belongeth to a Christian : oftentimes decaying in Christianity, bringeth on this deadness in the Minister : and therefore there can be no better mean of recovery than once to put the soul in a right posture in this respect. 3. It will further this much, that he begin with the serious exercise of Repentance of what is past, and that as to the defects that cleave to him both as a Christian and as a Minister : this maketh the beginning of a recovery to be solid. Therefore it is commanded, *vers.* 3. 4. There would be special care had in the doing of ministerial duties, that not only they be done, but that they be done in a right manner : that so every thing be done as in the sight of God, with an eye to this, that it may be found perfect before him. This is in the word *be watchful*, and implied under this Angels charge of not having his works perfect before God. 5. There would be zeal and carefulness in the begetting and keeping of life and liveliness among the people, as in himself : and for that cause, a doing of every thing with respect to that end. This was the Angels fault in his deadness, to wit, the neglecting of this, and it is commanded to him, to strengthen what was ready to die, as a thing befitting his recovery. This is in a condescending way to seek to feed the people with what is profitable, though thereby a Minister should seem to some to lose of his name and reputation. 6. There is need in all things to be denied, and to exercise faith in Him that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven Stars also, without which there is no attaining to liveliness : and for this end doth the Lord so describe Himself in the Inscription of this Epistle. Much dependance on Him, walking with Him, standing in His counsel, &c. and that is the meanest particular steps of any ministerial duty, as not daring to undertake any thing without Him, and so an acknowledging of Him in His grace, as to the fruit of every thing. This is a very fountain of the life of a Minister.

## LECTURE II.

*Ver.* 7. *And unto the Angel of the Church of Philadelphia, write, These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth, and no man openeth ;*

8. *I know thy works : behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it : for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.*

9. *Behold, I will make them of the Synagogue of Satan (which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie) behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.*

10. *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.*

11. *Behold, I come quickly, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*

12. *Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more*



more out : and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God : and I will write upon him my new name.

13. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.

**T**His sixth Epistle, directed to *Philadelphia*, hath the same Division with the rest, to wit, the Inscription, *vers. 7.* the Body of the Epistle, *vers. 8, 9, 10, 11.* and the Conclusion, *vers. 13.*

In the Inscription, the Lord, the director of this Epistle, doth set forth Himself in these three, 1. *He that is holy.* 2. *He that is true* : these are two essential Attributes of the God-head, and shew that our Lord Jesus is God. And He taketh these titles to Himself in this place, that, 1. He may shew unto this honest Church, that their honesty could not but be approved of Him, who was holiness it self. And, 2. to strengthen their Faith in the expectation of the performance of His promises, however they looked improbable-like, because He who made them is true, and *truth it self.* The third Title, is, *He that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth ; and shutteth, and no man openeth* : This respecteth His Office, and holdeth Him forth as the great Steward of the House of God, who is intrusted with the management of what concerneth the same, and is invested with Power and Authority suitable thereunto. It alludeth to *Isa. 22. 20, 21, 22, &c.* where the Lord, speaking of His preferring *Eliakim* unto the government of *Jerusalem* and *Judah*, doth express it thus, *And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulders : So, He shall open, and none shall shut, and He shall shut, and none shall open.* Now this, as attributed here to Christ, is not to be understood principally of His essential and absolute Dominion as God : for, that cannot be called the key of the house of *David* ; but it's to be understood of His Mediatorial Kingdom, whereby He, as Mediator, is invested with Power and Authority for ordering the affairs of the house of God. And as it standeth in this *verse*, it doth hold forth, 1. That Christ Jesus, as Mediator, hath a peculiar oversight and Government of the Church. 2. That in this Dominion of Christs, is fulfilled the promise of perpetuating the power of the house of *David* : therefore it's called *the key of the house of David*, which is committed to Him. 3. Here is held forth the Sovereignty and absoluteness of Christs Dominion : therefore *He shutteth, and no man openeth ; and openeth, and no man shutteth* : there is no marring of any of His orders : for, He having obtained this Name above every Name by Gods exalting of Him thereunto, *Phil. 2. 9.* there can be no imaginable competition with Him in the exercise of this Power. 4. This being compared with the former two titles, doth show that He who is intrusted with the supream Government of the Church, is God : He, is holy and true, and therefore can do no wrong to any, nor fail in the performance of what He promiseth : which is of great consolation to His People. This, lastly, is here mentioned, to encourage and strengthen this honest weak Angel and Church against the many difficulties which they had to wrestle with, as we will find in the Body of the Epistle.

This Angel and Church, it's like have been before others, far from that estimation that *Sardis* was in : for, they have but a little strength, and many enemies ; yet were they much more honest and commendable before God, and fruitful under the Ordinances they had : therefore the Lord indites a most comfortable Epistle unto them.

In the Body of the Epistle, we have these three things, 1. Their present condition, is in several respects described. 2. Their commendation is laid down. 3. Some excellent encouragements and directions are given them for the time to come. These three being interwoven, we must open them as they lye.

Beside this general, *I know thy works* : which, though common to all the rest of the Epistles in some respect, yet may be taken here as holding forth His particular approbation of this Church, because there is nothing quarrelled in her. This will not indeed prove that she was altogether free ; but that, being honest and free of gross faults, the Lord doth not rigidly reckon with her. Besides this, I say, in the 8. *vers.* this Churches good condition is set forth in these four, 1. *Behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it* : this is the fountain of all that is commendable in her, and from which it doth flow, to wit, Christs conferring such a mercy upon her : and this is a main encouragement premitted for the strengthening of the honest Angel of this Church. For understanding of it, we must consider, 1. What is meant by an *open door*. 2. What by Christs setting of it before the Angel, so as no man can shut it. By an *open door* usually is understood in the Scripture the Lords making way for profitable preaching of the Gospel, which standeth not mainly in having access and liberty, without any external restraint, to preach the Gospel ; but especially it stands in Gods giving inward liberty to the Preacher, and in His countenancing of the Word, and making it effectual and successful upon the hearts of Hearers. This is called, *Col. 4. 3.* *A door of utterance*, when a Minister is not straitened in preaching the Gospel, but, as it were, the door is casten open to him. And *2 Cor. 2. 12.* *When I came to Troas to preach Christs Gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord* : which is some special signification of Gods sending him and removing of difficulties out of the way, and making his Ministry successful there, And, *1 Cor. 16. 9.* it is said, *a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.* So, that there may be an effectual door opened, even where there is much opposition. In sum, it imports these two or three, 1. That there is a straitenedness in Ministers who cannot bring forth the Gospel as it ought to be brought forth, and will when the Lord sendeth forth the Spirit and enlargeth a man with boldness to speak the same : in this respect, a door of utterance is opened unto him, as in that place, *Col. 4. 3.* is clear. 2. That there is a further let beside this, to wit, when the ears and hearts of Hearers are so looked up that the Word hath no entrance, but is repelled. The Lord openeth this door, when by the work of His Spirit upon hearts, as upon the heart of *Lydia*, He doth make the Word to be received and admitted : in which respect, (*2 Thess. 3. 1.*) *Paul* desireth them to pray that the Word may have *free course*, that is, that there be no shut doors to mar the progress of the same. Both these are understood here, to wit, liberty for the Minister to speak, and that with countenance and success among the People. We conceive also that this phrase of an *open door*, doth take in a concurring of Gods providence, for the keeping of the Word ministered, and Ordinances in such a place in both the respects that are mentioned, notwithstanding of the numerousness and maliciousness of opposers : and this agreeth well with that word, in this *verse*, *and no man shall shut it.* And this may be a third thing imported in this expression, though it be not of the same kind with the former two every way.

By Christs setting open of this door before the Angel, so that none can shut it, is holden forth, 1. Christs supremacy and sovereignty in giving Gifts to men, liberty and inward freedom to improve them, and also a blessing upon them in making of them successful. It is not Gifts, by which a man will be able

able to Preach, if the Lord give not a door of utterance ; yea, even the great Apostle *Paul* hath need of this, *Col. 4. 3.* nor is it the having of utterance that will obtain fruits among the people, if the Lord do not open an effectual door, and give the Word free course among them. Hence it is, that sometimes where there is most utterance given, there may be less success than where there are fewer Gifts ; because he, whose privilege it is to set open doors, doth open more fully the door of utterance to the one, and the effectual door to the other, and doth not open both equally to all. 2. This importeth the necessity and inevitableness of success : when Christ thus openeth the door, success cannot but follow : and no man, or devil can shut out or impede the same, when He pleaseth to countenance His Ministers, and to commend the Word to the hearts of hearers. Now, it may appear what the meaning of this part of the verse is, which relateth especially to the Angel, to wit, I have called thee to this Ministry, and have given thee some measure of utterance, though thou hast not much ability, and especially, I have ordered matters so as the Word from thee shall have free course and success. And rage who will, this shall not be obstructed. By which also we may see why the Lord took the Title to Himself, that doth immediately go before this.

The second thing in the verse, is, *for thou hast a little strength* : by *little strength* here, is not to be understood weakness in grace ; (for, that is eminently commended) nor yet little countenance in the discharge of Ministerial duties, But it looketh to his parts and abilities, which it's like, were not many and great in comparison of what others had, that is, it may be he was not able to speak of, nor search into so many profound mysteries, and follow doubtful disputations, as others were in capacity to do. This is not mentioned here as any ground of opprobry to him, nor yet as any ground of commendation, being considered simply and in it self ; but it is mentioned for these two reasons, which being put together, will clear the scope. 1. It is given as a ground of Christs opening the door before him, and as an evidence that what success he had, was to be attributed to His countenancing of him, because thou thy self hast but a little strength. And this sheweth, that as oftentimes Christ is most tender to the weak Believers ; so also to the weak Ministers, that are yet sent by Him, and honest in the discharge of their Commission. 2. It is mentioned here to heighten the commendation that followeth, to wit, that though thou hast a little strength, yet *thou hast kept my Word*. It is the joyning of these two together, that sheweth wherefore this is here taken notice of.

The third and fourth expressions, which most expressly hold forth the commendation, are, *Thou hast kept my Word, and hast not denied my Name* : by *keeping of the Word* here, is not onely understood the keeping of purity in Doctrine ; but especially these two, 1. A keeping it in practice, by being conform thereto in their walk. 2. An avowed Preaching of the Truth by the Minister, and his adhering to and owning of the same in his station, notwithstanding of all the reproaches which he met with : for the scope, relating especially to the Minister, this keeping of the Word must imply also something peculiar to him, which is commonly expressed in the Old Testament by this Word of *keeping the Lords charge*. The last word, *thou hast not denied my Name*, is to the same purpose ; but doth import more than is asserted, to wit, that notwithstanding of the many trials thou hast met with, yet thou not only hast not faintly denied my name ; but hast openly and confidently avowed and confessed the same. And these two, being compared with a little strength which the Angel had, do make the evidences and commendation of his honesty the more wonderful. In the 9. and 10. verses, the Lord giveth two special encouragements unto them, having also some testimony of their by-gone integrity included in them. It is like this honest Church, hath been under a two-fold persecution, (as we have seen in some of the former

Epistles.) 1. From the corrupt and unbelieving *Jews*, who having Synagogues in many places, did prove great persecutors and reproachers of the Name of Christ, and His Worshipers : This the Lord doth encourage them against, in the 9. v. 2. From Heathens : in reference to which, He comforteth them, v. 10.

The Consolation, which is laid down, *vers. 9.* doth express these three, 1. There is a description of these corrupt *Jews*, they are said to be of the *synagogue of Satan*, who say they are *Jews* and are not, but do lie, that is, they indeed call themselves *Jews*, and children of *Abraham*, and Gods Covenanted people, &c. but they do lie, it is not so, for now they being broken off by their unbelief, are truly of the synagogue of Satan, and followers of him, as we expounded it, *chap. 2. vers. 9.*

2. There is the promise which the Lord maketh to this Church, *I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee*. In sum, it is this, these corrupt *Jews* do now calumniate thee ; as if thou wert not of my Church nor beloved by me ; but, saith he, by my inward Power I will so move and incline them, as they shall willingly come and worship before thy feet, and know indeed that I have loved thee.

The words of the promise may be two ways understood, and we conceive that both come well in here, 1. They may be understood of sincere conversion ; and so the meaning is, I will convert many of these blasphemers, and as an evidence thereof, make them come and worship before thy feet, that is, really Worship God in the Assembly with thee, like that word, *Isai. 60. 14.* *The sons also of them that afflicted thee, shall come bending unto thee, and they that despise thee, shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet, and they shall call thee, the city of the Lord, the holy one of Israel.* And in this expression, the Prophets scope, is, to fore-tell the conversion of the *Gentiles* in the dayes of the Gospel. The word in the first language, is, *I will give them, &c.* which doth express more significantly both the nature of this work as to the Angel ; (it is a very excellent and singular gift to him to have blasphemers made converts) and also it sheweth the freeness thereof, it being a Gift of Christs Grace. This we conceive is to be taken as a part of the meaning : And is clear, 1. from the scope, which is to shew the fruit of Christs keeping the door open before this Minister for his encouragement, to wit, His making the Word powerful for the captivating of gain-sayers unto the obedience of Christ. 2. The word added, *and they shall know that I have loved thee*, seemeth to import something of a kindly principle acting them in this.

Again, 2. The words may be understood as holding forth a fained submission of many unto the Ordinances of Christ ; who from Christs clear owning of His Church shall be made, being as it were astonished, to acknowledge the same, and to say, *doubtless God is among such a people of a truth* ; as it is, *1 Cor. 14. 25.* And this being a promise made to the Church, as a piece of her splendor and happiness, that her enemies shall lie, or give fained obedience unto her, *Deut. 33. 29.* and a thing also that doth tend to the evidencing of the Lords respect to His Church, we take it in under this promise likewise. So the meaning will be, I will give some of these *Jews* as real converts unto thee, and others of them shall be so far convinced of My respect to thee, as shall make them counterfit in their profession, and give thee some reverence also : for, if there were not some converts, the promise would not be so great as it is ; yet, it cannot be expected that this reality should be universal amongst these corrupt *Jews*. And according to the former exposition, these words which follow, *and to know that I have loved thee*, are two ways also to be understood, to wit, either of such a Spiritual discerning of the saving effects of Gods love to such a people, which begetteth a charitable persuasion in them of the sincerity of such and such persons ; or, it is to be understood of some



some common and general conviction, flowing from some outward evidences of Gods favour, which often is in many hypocrites.

The third thing in the verse, is, the Lords making this promise so observable, both by doubling and repeating the same; and also by prefixing a *behold* at every time thereunto: which sheweth, 1. That the thing is most rare which is here promised, to wit, to have blasphemers made converts. 2. That it is a most excellent favour to a Minister or Church when such a mercy is bestowed. And, 3. that although it be difficult-like; yet in this case it is sure, seeing for the confirmation of the Faith of this Church the Lord hath repeated the same.

The encouragement in reference to the other persecution followeth, *vers.* 10. Wherein, 1. there is a common tryal foretold. 2. There is a promise made to them in reference to the same. And, 3. some ground, as it were a reason of this promise, is premised, *vers.* 10.

The tryal which is foretold, is several wayes set forth. 1. It is called a *temptation*. It is usual in Scripture to stile affliction by the name of *temptation*, as *Jam.* 1. 2. *Count it all joy when ye fall in divers temptations*; and so also, *vers.* 11. The reason is, because such afflictions want never many circumstances waiting upon them, which do indeed make them to be temptations: and so either men are tryed by them, or, through their own corruption, snared upon such occasions. 2. It is an *hour* of temptation: to signifie both the definiteness and shortness thereof: which doth carry an encouragement in the bosome of it. 3. It is a tryal *which shall come upon all the world*: By *world* here, is not to be understood the Heathen world, as contradistinct from the Church: for, that world is not the object of such tryals; but is instrumental therein: it is then the Church spread up and down throughout the world, They shall be tryed. And usually it was so, when persecution was moved by the Heathen Emperours, it spread through all the corners of the world, where any part of the Church was. 4. The end thereof, is, *to try them that dwell upon the earth*, that is, the Saints that live upon the earth: and so *earth* here, is not contra-distinguished from the Church simply; but thereby the Church-militant is contra-distinguished from the Church-triumphant. For the privilege of *Philadelphia* is not, that she shall be kept from ills that are common to the men of the world; but this, that when the Church should be under persecution generally, the Lord should secretly and tenderly preserve her from the weight of that tryal, that others were to meet with: which is the second thing to be considered in the verse.

The promise, in reference to this tryal, which is made to *Philadelphia*, is in these words, *I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, &c.* It may two wayes be understood, 1. As being a promise to keep her from any prejudice by that tryal, though she might meet with the same: this is indeed truth; but cannot be said to be a peculiar privilege to *Philadelphia*: for, all the Lords people might plead and expect that, and yet some peculiar thing seemeth to be holden out as to *Philadelphia* in this promise. Therefore, 2. we understand it thus, when others shall be under persecution, thou shalt either be altogether free from that particular tryal, which is to come; or, at least in a great measure shall be kept from the extremities that others thereby shall be put unto. And in this respect, the promise beareth something peculiar to *Philadelphia*: and therefore cannot be made use of by others as a ground to expect freedom from temporal crosses, except there be the like warrant to apply the same.

The last thing in the verse, (though it be first in order) is the ground to which the Lord doth knit this promise, *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee, &c.* The word of *Christ* patience, is the Gospel: called so, 1. because usually the cross followeth it, and the Professors thereof have

need of patience. 2. Because it is the great School-master that teacheth the exercise of patience: for which reasons, it's also called the Kingdom and Patience of Jesus Christ, *Chap.* 1. *vers.* 9. Their *keeping* of this word of His patience, doth import their owning of, and adhering to, this Gospel with much patience under many crosses and much persecution: and so this connexion doth not imply any merit in them procuring this peculiar privilege; but doth express Christs tenderness, and to say so, His condescending equity in His proceeding, who, seeing this Church had a little strength, and yet had born out more stedfastly and patiently under many former tryals, then others who might be of greater abilities, Therefore, out of His tenderness, He now promiseth to keep them free in a peculiar manner from a coming storm.

The last thing in the Body of the Epistle, is the advertisement, *v.* 11. which hath these three, 1. An assertion of Christs coming, and that quickly, *Behold I come quickly*: which sheweth, that though he seem now to be absent, and to delay His coming; yet it will be found otherwise. It is said to be *quickly*, 1. Because it is not long in comparison with Eternity. 2. Because it will be sudden to enemies. 3. It will be seasonable to friends. It will not be one hour behind the due time: and therefore may be said to be quickly. 4. He is for the present hastening, and to say so, making dispatch of what is to precede His coming; and so may be said to be coming quickly. This is here mentioned as a ground of encouragement to the Angel to continue stedfast upon the one side, and as a watch-word to scare them from declining on the other, seeing Christ was to come to Judgement, and that shortly. The second word, is a direction, *hold that fast which thou hast*: which is in sum, ye are in a good condition now, be diligent to retain the same, as the like expression was expounded, *Chap.* 2. 25. The third thing, is, a warning added to this direction, *hold fast, &c. that no man take thy Crown*: in sum it is this, thou art now in a royal condition, thy honesty is thy Crown before Me and others, and it hath a promise of a Crown after this: therefore be diligent and stedfast, lest by your declining ye be prejudged of your Crown. It alludeth to running amongst men, where they that sit up in the way, though having for a time run well, yet obtain not the Crown, because some other outstrips them, and obtaineth the same: here the scope onely, is, to shew that these who sit up in the practice of Christianity, shall as surely be deprived of the Crown of Glory; and it is here added, to shew how the Lord addeth spurs to His most faithful servants for preventing of the falling.

The first part of the Conclusion, (for we shall say nothing of the second) is, *vers.* 12. comprehending five privileges to the overcomer. The first is, *I will make him a pillar in the Temple of my God*: by the *Temple of my God*, must be here understood Heaven, and so to be *made a pillar*, is to be fixed there in Heaven, as a Trophee of the Victory of Jesus Christ, and as singularly and eminently fitted for, furnished with, and fixed in the glory that is there. For, 1. The properties that follow, will shew that this can onely be understood of Heaven. 2. Thus also it can only agree with all the other promises that are made to the overcomer, which principally relate to Heaven. 3. There is no other thing that can be expected by every overcomer but Heaven.

The second thing, is, *he shall go no more out*: the access that Believers have to Gods company and Temple here hath interruptions; and the Believer is again soon down from any mount where Christ may be transfigured before him: but (saith the Lord) when I shall make him a pillar in the Temple of my God, and settle him in Heaven, there shall no more be any interruption of communion, either by Gods hiding of Himself upon the one side, or from the Believers whoring from Him upon the other; but he shall be by the powerful grace of God established

established there, and shall go no more out. And this is added as a special consolation to the Believer that is weary of his own gadding and whoring from God; that there is a time coming when that shall be broken off, and he shall go no more out.

The third step, is, and I will write upon him the name of my God: pillars that were erected as monuments of honour, were honourable according to the name or inscription that was written upon them: Now, there can be none more honourable than to have the Name of God written upon them, and to be devoted to Him. We conceive also, it implieth a sharing and partaking of the glory of God in some measure, as a poor creature is able to partake of the same.

The fourth thing, is, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God. We must understand, 1. What is meant by this New Jerusalem, before it can be understood what it is to bear its Name. By the New Jerusalem and city of my God, we understand one of two, either 1. Heaven, which is the seat of the Church Triumphant, called here the New Jerusalem, because it so far doth exceed the splendor and beauty of the Church, or Jerusalem, here upon earth: and it is said to come down from Heaven, because by the preaching of the Gospel the Kingdom of God is brought near, even to the door. Or, 2. The congregation of the first-born that are already perfected in Heaven, called the New Jerusalem, because though they be of that same Church of Christ, yet are they in respect of their glorious qualifications and perfections, as it were, a new Church. And thus it is said to come down from Heaven, not so much to signify any locall mutation, as to shew where it is for the time: and that their original, as such, is from God. Both these turn to one, and shew that by this promise is understood, that the overcomer shall be admitted as a free Burgess and Citizen to glory amongst the rest of the Congregation of the first-born. And thus to have the name thereof written upon the overcomer, is to have Him, as it were, declared a free Burgess and Citizen of that glorious Incorporation. That it is thus to be understood of Heaven, and not of any state of the Church upon earth, the reasons before mentioned do evince. Beside, it is a promise that is to be performed to every overcomer, and that after his full Victory here; and so consequently after his death: and therefore can be understood of no other thing but Heaven.

The last thing, is, and I will write upon him my new name: the Mediators new name, is, the exaltation which He hath received after His Resurrection and compleat Victory, as is clear, Philip. 2. 9. The writing of this upon the overcomer, is, the making of Him a joynt sharer of that His Glory; and so to sit upon one Throne with himself, and eat and drink at one Table with Him, and to behold His Glory, as Himself doth pray, John 17. 22, 23, 24. the due and proportionable difference being always kept betwixt the head and members. Now, put these together, and so the overcomer shall be glorious in himself: For, so, 1. He shall be a pillar. 2. He shall partake of the Glory of God, and have His Name upon him. 3. He shall partake of the Glory of Heaven and the Saints that are there already. 4. He shall partake of the Mediators Glory and bear His new Name: and what more can be imagined? Thus the Lord shall be admired in all that believe, 2 Thes. 1. 10. In that day when every Believer shall be as a Trophie erected to the glory of the Grace of God, and for a memorial of the love that our blessed Lord Jesus had unto, and of the Victory He obtained for elect sinners by His redeeming of them.

It rests now that we observe somethings further from this Epistle beside what is already hinted: wherein it is not our purpose to insist.

Observe, 1. There is difference betwixt gifts requisite to the

being of a Minister, and success by the exercise of these in the Ministry. There is here a *little strength*, that respecteth the first; and an *open door*, which respecteth the second: and these two are distinguished one from another. And thus we will find throughout Pauls Epistles, that difference is made betwixt his liberty to Preach upon the one side, and Gods opening an effectual door to him upon the other. 2. We see that Christ is the giver of both, to wit, of gifts to Ministers, and of success among the People. 3. We see that he distributeth not to all alike; but an open door is set before some, more than before others, and when not at all before others, as by comparing this and other Epistles together is clear.

It may be asked here, 1. What way a Minister may know if an effectual door be opened to him amongst the People, seeing Paul sometimes asserteth the same? 2. How a Minister, having such an opportunity, ought to carry in the improving thereof?

To the first we say, that this cannot be discerned alannerly from a mans gifts: for, it may be shut where great gifts are, as we will see hereafter. Beside, it is like Paul had not alway this door open to him, at least it was more in one place than another. Nor is it meerly to be gathered from a mans freedom from external crosses in a place, nor yet from the great following he may have: for, there may be many adversaries where this effectual door is opened, 1 Cor. 16. 4. and there may be no such thing, where there is great peace and applause. Yet, we conceive by these and such like characters, this may be somewhat discernable, 1. When a Minister getteth the door of utterance upon the one side opened to him, and there is an opening of ears among the People to welcome the same upon the other: which is not to be understood of carnal itching after, or being tickled with a gift; but of love to edification, and simplicity and diligence amongst them: which sheweth that such a man and his gift is commended to them; and so that they are in the greater capacity to get good of him. 2. Where this is, it hath real changes following, and much solid work: for, by it people are not made light, and notional; but are made humble, serious, tender, fruitful, &c. 3. Where such a door is opened, the devil often rageth, and setteth himself to oppose, traduce, or some way to blast the Ministry of such a person more than of many others. This poor Angel hath much affliction, when the Ministers in Sardis and Laodicea are free. And so when an effectual door is opened to Paul at Ephesus, this is added, that there are many adversaries, 1 Cor. 16. Yet, even under such afflictions there are many trysts of providence to be marked in the Lords way, for countenancing that Ministry, and many evidences of respect to the same from such as are tender. 4. It is a good token of an open door, when some way observably the Lord defeateth the devil and profanity in a place, and is making him fall like lightning from heaven by the Preaching of the Word. 5. The experimental proof that is most sure, is an actual gaining of ground upon the kingdom of the devil, and a bringing off of prisoners unto Jesus Christ: which is the proof given here, where God promiseth new converts; and is ever supposed by Paul, when he mentioneth this door.

Now to the second, to wit, how a Minister ought to use such an opportunity? We say, 1. It is to be improved with all diligence in his duty, as a man that is to reap corn that is already ripe. 2. It is to be made use of with all humility and self-denial, lest by being tickled there he pre-judge the Master of His Glory, and so procure straining to himself. 3. It would be with much fear and watchfulness: with fear, lest he himself miscarry; or any soul miscarry in the birth, because of his unskilfulness: with watchfulness, lest the devil sow tares while he is sleeping: and the conception prove false without reality.



zeal as to many hearers. This is Pauls word, *1 Cor. 2.3. I was among you in much weakness, and in much fear and trembling,* which sheweth the kindly impression which he had, both of his own and the peoples infirmities. 4. It would be improv'd zealously, that is, so as the Authority of Christ may appear upon His Ordinances both to adversaries and friends. 5. It would be made use of (to say so) *solidly*, by making the foundation sure, by proposing solide food to souls, as the substantial Gospel-truths, and the uncontroverted duties of holiness: for, there is hazard too soon to bring such a people to the new wine of the most sublime things in Doctrine, or the most extraordinary practices of grown Christians: and it is better that they be fed upon milk, and what is healthful and nourishing, than that to please their appetites, they be diverted with useless Questions. 6. There would be much dependence upon God in such a case; for He is the Master, and hath appointed a great Steward over the house who hath the keys laid upon His shoulder: and the Minister in such a case, would know that he hath no Tack or Lease of such a condition, but is at the Masters pleasure: and therefore he would be acknowledged in every step of the Work as it is done, or in doing. Lastly, The great shot of all Preaching would be driven constantly, both in publick and private, to wit, the edification and salvation of the people, and the forming of Christ in them by travelling, as it were, in birth for that effect. *Obs. 4.* Sometimes there may be greater success unto mean Gifts, by Christs countenancing the same, than where Gifts are in themselves more eminent and shining: the reason is, because, for the attaining of success, it is not only necessary to have the exercise of a Gift; but also to have a door opened to them by Christ: and these two are sometimes separated, as was formerly said. And by so doing, the Lord would teach Ministers, to know their own insufficiency for any such thing; and also necessitate both Ministers and People to the acknowledgement of Him. There is a notable instance of the Power of mean Gifts beyond greater abilities in the History of the Council of Nice, wherein a subtle Philosopher who had long kept the Assembly jangling with disputes, at last by a man of small parts (in respect of others who had been disputing) was convinced by the simple propounding of the Truth of the Gospel, which he closed thus, *this is the Truth of God, Philosopher, believest thou this?* Who answered, *he did.* Then said the honest confessor (for so is he stiled by the Author) *If so, then follow me, and be baptized: unto which the Philosopher yielded, as if he had never learned to gain-say; expressing these words to the hearers, and especially to some other Philosophers that were with him, so long as I was dealt with by words, I did repell words with words, but when power proceeded with words out of the mouth of him that spoke, I was not able, said he, to resist that:* and thereupon instantly went out to be baptized. At first all the Doctors were affrighted, that the Truth should have suffered; and therefore hardly gave way to him to speak; yet did that simplicity prevail by Gods blessing to the conviction and conversion of the Philosopher, when all these Scholastick debates did not. This is recorded by *Rufinus* in the third Chapter of his book, which is the first added by him to *Eusebius* his Ecclesiastick History. *Obs. 5.* That some men of mean and small Gifts or Parts, and who are not able to do much by writing or disputing against subtle adversaries; do yet often prove more stedfast adherers to Truth in times of persecution, than others who in the former respects have gone far beyond them, and have been of greater esteem as friends to Truth, both with themselves and others. This Angels strength was not much; but his stedfastness and patience under affliction was great. *Worthy Perkins*, on the place, giveth a memorable instance of this in the time of the

persecution under *Queen Mary of England*, to wit, that there was an honest man of mean Parts, and no great esteem, near to *Cambridge*, who did seal the Truth with his blood, when all the great Schollers and Doctors of that University did miserably and shamefully make defection from the same. *Obs. 6.* That oftentimes an honest Minister with mean Gifts, hath more countenance and success in his Ministry than where greater Gifts without honesty are, as by comparing this Angel with the Angels of *Sardis* and *Laodicea* in this same Chapter is clear. For (to say no more) he hath this advantage, that his works may be found perfect before God, wherein the others cannot but be defective. *Obs. 7.* That a little measure of Gifts, being honestly and faithfully improv'd, have their commendation from Jesus Christ, as if they were of the highest measure and degree: because it is not Gifts that commendeth a Minister to Christ, but faithfulness in improving the measure which he hath: and so if two talents be faithfully improv'd, it will be said, *well done to that servant*, and he will be called *faithful*, even as well as he, who had five, or even ten talents, bestowed upon him. And if this were well considered, Ministers might be less anxious for the measure of their Gifts, and more provoked to be serious and faithful in their improving of the same. *Obs. 8.* That it is a special mercy, even to be kept from the common tryals that others meet with: there is much mercy in Gods peoples being kept free from ills, that otherwayes they might be overmastered with: and it is not by chance or fortune, that the lot of one Church or Person is more easy than the lot of others; but this cometh from the Lords over-ruling Providence, keeping them from that hour of tentation, which in His wisdom is ordered for others; who is therefore humbly and thankfully to be acknowledged in the same. *Obs. 9.* That stedfastness in honesty and faithful adherence to Christ and His Truth, do never of themselves involve a people in tryals and afflictions; but in Gods good providence, do often prevent the same: therefore this honest and zealous Church, is kept from a coming storm, which was to try all the world beside. *Obs. 10.* That it is not impossible to God to make open blasphemers real converts, and that sometimes He hath actually done and doth the same. *Obs. 11.* That when He doth this, it is one of the rarest Gifts that can be bestowed upon a Church, and one of the greatest confirmations that an honest Minister can meet with in his Ministry; and in the usual dispensation of Gods Providence, doth attend a Ministers honest, zealous and faithful discharge of his duty in simplicity. Therefore both Ministers and People would not only be animated and encouraged to pray for the same; but also to love and follow honest simplicity and faithfulness, as the most suitable and probable way for attaining the same. *Obs. 12.* That as usually true conversion to God and sincere love to the Saints go together, so, also, is it found in experience that the more bitterness hath been against the Ordinances, Saints or Servants of our Lord Jesus, There will be, if conversion be true, the more full and manifest testimonies of respect shewed to them, even often beyond what are shewed from these that have been formerly sincere. *Obs. 13.* That profane men before their conversion, do not look upon honest simple and Godly followers of God, as so beloved of Him as indeed they are. *Obs. 14.* It is a good token when men are brought in sincerity, to acknowledge, that it is neither the great men, nor the wise and learned men of the world that are beloved of God; but only the Godly, and all such, whatever their place or parts be. *Obs. 15.* The right impression of Godliness in a Person or Church, is not to conceive such and such to be more deserving than others; but to be more beloved of God; which is the great fountain of all the rest.

## Concerning Ministerial qualifications.

**I**F we will compare the Angels of these three Churches in this Chapter together, we will find great difference: these of *Sardis* and *Laodicea*, it is like, had many gifts, which made the first get a name from others, and the last to esteem of himself; yet hath none of them a great commendation for grace, but the contrary; He of *Sardis* had a name, but *was dead*, and his works (what ever they appeared to men) were not perfect before God: what he of *Laodicea* was, that Epistle also will clear. And for fruit, the Angel of *Sardis* hath little, but a few names; and it is like he of *Laodicea* had less or none at all. The Angel of *Philadelphia* again, is in all these three contrary: he hath few parts, but a little strength; yet hath a good testimony of honesty and success. Whence may we not only gather, 1. That there are different measures of gifts amongst Ministers. And, 2. That some are more honest than others. And, 3. That the most honest have often the meanest gifts in appearance; and who have greatest gifts, often are least conscionable in the improving of them. And, 4. That a sincere honest Minister may have very mean gifts, either considered in themselves, or as being compared with others; and yet may be more faithful in improving of them, be more accepted of by Jesus Christ with his small measure, and have more fruits and greater success, than others of more shining gifts without tenderness in their walk: But we may also have occasion to enquire, what qualifications are requisite in a Minister of the Gospel? and particularly, if Learning be any way useful to a Minister? or, if it be not rather hurtful, seeing weak *Philadelphia* is so commended, when others are reprov'd? or, if grace ought to be reckoned amongst ministerial qualifications? There are here extremes, some giving too much to Learning, and too little to Grace, and others doing the contrary. These are not then to be looked on as inconsistent; but as agreeing well together: for, it is not the Angel of *Sardis* his reproof, that he had a name or gifts; but that he was unanswerable to them: nor is it *Philadelphia's* commendation, that he had a little strength; but that he improved well that little which he had: otherwise, one talent may be hid and abused as well as five. To speak a word therefore to the thing, we conceive that these three are necessary for the compleat qualifying of a Minister, or, of one of the Ministry, to wit, 1. Gifts. 2. Learning. 3. Grace. The second helpeth to manage the first; the third sanctifieth both, and maketh them level at the right end and mark. Yet take these advertisements, 1. That there are degrees in all these, and that we intend not to stint to any rigid measure or degree in any of them. 2. That although they be necessary; yet not equally, nor after the same manner, the first two being necessary to the *esse*, or being of ministerial qualifications; the last belonging to the *bene esse*, or to the well and integral being thereof, as will afterward appear.

By gifts, we understand a fitness given of God, whereby one is capacitated for such a Calling: and although by improving, it may encrease; yet we conceive that it is in it self no acquired thing simply, but is like a Stock or a Talent that is given to Trade with in such a Station: and therefore by no pains, skill, or art, can be attained, where it is not given. Hence it is peculiarly called a gift: and of Christ's giving, *Ephes. 4. 12. 1 Cor. 12. and 14. 1 Tim. 4. 14. and 2 Tim. 1. 6.* The Apostle comprehendeth it in that word *διδασκαλίας*, apt to Teach, *1 Tim. 3.* And we may take it up in these three, 1. A capacity to discern and conceive of the things of God with some distinctness: if this be not, there can be no progress to any other step; and this may be called the gift of knowledge (as there is a word of knowledge which doth suppose this gift, *1 Corinth. 12.*) whereby one is able to take up the truths of the Gospel, which every one is not: this is prayed for to *Timothy*, *2 Tim. 2. 7.* not as to a Christian simply, but as to a Minister. 2. It taketh in a

fitness to express and bring forth, for the edification of others, what they have conceived themselves: called by the Apostle *ut-terance*, *Col. 4. 3, 4.* and he that hath it, *διδασκτικός*. And it may be called the word of wisdom or knowledge, whereby one is fitted profitably to speak to others: without which, no knowledge is sufficient. 3. There is also comprehended in this gift, an energie, or efficacy, which bringeth out things in another manner, and with another stamp than the Rhetorick and eloquence of men can do. Hence the Word and Power in the Preaching of the Gospel are distinguished, *1 Corinth. 4. 19. I will know not their word, but their power*, (what the two great Divines *Calvin*, and *Martyr* say on the place, is excellent to this purpose) and this, we conceive, is the main differing thing of a ministerial gift, the former two being common to men of all professions in some respect, but this is not. Hence many men may have much knowledge, and be able by great eloquence to express it, and yet be far from that power and life which a native ministerial gift hath with it, as the corrupt Teachers at *Corinth*, who abounded in humane eloquence, were: which (as holy and Learned Mr. *Boyd* of *Trochrege* saith) is to be tried, not *ex dono*, or, by the gift only; but, *ex doni efficaciam*, or, by the efficacy of that gift in the Impression of it upon consciences. And, although this may be best known to a spiritual ear, which can try and discern gifts, as the palat meats; yet is the thing clear in Scripture, and often (as it is more and less) will be acknowledged by natural Hearers; such as not a few of Christs, and *John* the Baptist's Hearers were, who yet notwithstanding discovered this power and efficacy in their preaching, which they did not in the preaching of the Scribes and Pharisees; *Matth. 7. 29.* that is, when a preaching for matter and manner of expressing exquisite, yet will less affect, and have less weight, than some few words spoken thus in simplicity by another. This efficacy consisteth not in natural fervour and out-crying: there may be much of that, and little of this, and contrarily, nor consisteth it in any meer exercise of art, in disposing of the matter spoken, or choosing of taking expressions. These things, it is true, when not affected, may have their own use; but otherways such affectation of words, may well draw men to admire the carrier, or love their gift; but doth not engage to esteem of Him that sendeth, and chiefly to commend the matter that is spoken, to the conscience; which is the native rule by which a true gift is discerned and squared. And we may consider it mainly in these, 1. In its simple plainness, or plain simplicity, whereby the Truths of God are proposed like themselves, having nothing mixed in to divert the hearer from them; but they made as naked as can be to them, for their understanding of them: this simplicity is often spoken of by *Paul*, and is opposed to humane eloquence, as in the Epistles to the *Corinthians*. 2. It consisteth in evidence and demonstration, a gift whereby one is fitted convincingly to propose or press such a thing, not so much doctrinally in drawing conclusions from premisses, as by leaving the impression of such a thing upon the conscience, that it is bound with it: this is called the evidence and demonstration of the Spirit and Power, *1 Cor. 2. 4.* 3. There is a power and efficacy which accompanieth this, as to its effects: this maketh threatnings so weighty, that *Paul* will make *Felix* to tremble; and it maketh promises sweet and perswasive, so that *Agrippa* will almost be perswaded to be a Christian: this will make even the idiot or stranger (*1 Corinth. chap. 14.*) to say, *Doubtless God is there.* And that is more than an ordinary discourse, even of such a subject, thus to commend the Word and our selves to mens consciences in the sight of God; when by his assistance, He maketh the Gospel to triumph in every place, and to be a sweet savour to Him in all,



2 Corinth. 2. 14. 4. This ministerial gift taketh in a seasonable way of speaking as to the time, occasion, hearers, &c. Thus it is a gift of right dividing the Word of Truth, 2 Tim. 2. 15. so as neither to strengthen the wicked, nor to faint and make sad the righteous; but to lay battery at the proud imaginations of natural men; for taking in of these strong holds, and to poure oyl in the wounds of exercised sinners, and that so, as the one, may not by the Preachers fault, partake of the allowance, or be wounded with the stroak that is designed for the other; this is indeed true learning, to be able to condescend and make plain a word in season to the weary, Isa. 50. 4. and such a one, is a work-man that needeth not to be ashamed. 5. There is in this gift a *πάροια*, or holy boldnesse and freedom, whereby in an Authoritative way the Lords Word is spoken as it ought to be spoken, such as is observed to be in the chief Pastor his Preaching, Matth. 7. 29. it is called (Col. 4. 3. and 4.) a door of utterance, and a speaking as it ought to be spoken; or, as it is, 1 Pet. 4. 11. as the oracles of God: so that in less or more, this gift ought to have a stamp of the Majesty of God on it, as His Word hath in it self. And this rebuking with Authority, that none despise this Ministry, is both often mentioned in Pauls practice, and recommended by him to others, in the persons of Timothy and Titus: and it is like, something of all hath been in this Angel of Philadelphia. And this power is not any thing physically and inseparably united to the man, or to his Preaching, but is in him a fitnessse and dexterity given of God, which He accompanieth with a singular impression by His Spirit ordinarily on the hearts and consciences of hearers, thereby discovering it to be of Him.

For the second, to wit learning, what to say of it will be harder to decide, seeing it hath many several acceptions, as, 1. It may be taken for acquaintance with Scripture, and with divine and heavenly things in it, or, for acquaintance with humane literature, as knowledge of tongues, arts, sciences, &c. 2. We may consider learning, either materially in it self, as it is a fitnessse which a man hath to reason for a Truth against an Error, to draw conclusions from premisses, to open hard places, or reconcile seeming contradicting places, and to answer objections, &c. or we may consider it in the manner how men come by this facultie, or acquire this fitnessse to understand tongues, to investigate and search into difficulties, &c. and thereby come to be enabled to improve the gift given, and to stir it up: which is either by an extraordinary illumination, as the Apostles had it, and Prophets of old, without any mediate pains or means; or by an ordinary and mediate way of reading, studying, and learning of these by mediate helps, which may conduce for that end. Now, in answer we say,

1. That learning considered materially, or in it self, as it implieth acquaintance with the things of God, That is simply necessary: This all the Apostles had, to wit, ability to reason against gain-sayers, to open the mysteries of the Gospel, &c. This is required in all Ministers, 1 Tim. 3. 2. and Titus 1. 9. that he be apt to teach: and it is useful in reference to the truths he hath to propound, whereof somthings are hard and not easily understood which the unlearned and ignorant, are ready to pervert to their own destruction, 2 Pet. 3. 16. A Minister then had need to be thus learned, lest he speak, not knowing whereof he affirmeth, 1 Tim. 1. 7. and (being unable to hold fast the form of sound words which himself hath learned, 2 Tim. 1. 13.) he be turned aside to foolish unlearned questions, chap. 2. 23. It is also needful for his opening of Scripture, for his dealing with adversaries; and that both to exhort and convince gain-sayers, Tit. 1. 9, 11. whose mouths are to be stopped by him, as, in many of the Epistles, we see Paul did; and that in a learned and methodick way of dispute: and this did Stephen, Acts 6. and it is frequent in that story. Yea, there is even a learning required in reference unto the weary, unto whom words and expressions by a singular dexterity are to be wailed, Is. 50. 4.

2. For the manner of acquiring this learning and ability, we think it not simple necessary to ty it to the ordinary mediate wayes: for, God often did communicate it immediately; and if He had thought good, could have continued it in His Church in that manner.

Yet, 3. Seeing the Lord now giveth not this acquaintance with Divine Truths, and ability to reason, &c. immediately; the way of studying, by reading, and being brought up by others in the knowledge of these, is now, upon this supposition, simply necessary also: for, if it be necessary to know the mystery of the Gospel, and men by an immediate way do not attain it, then it is necessary to follow the way, whereby it is attainable. That it is not now immediately communicated, we suppose is clear in experience: men cannot now speak with a strange tongue; yea, not read their own tongue without teaching and learning: and can it be supposed that they shall be fit for prophesie, which is the greater gift? Beside, the Lord hath not left us His Word to ly by us, but that we should read it, as the command is expressed, 1 Tim. 4. 13. &c. Give thy self to reading: yea, He hath so wailed many parts of His Word purposely, that the reader should be provoked to search into it, as is several times insinuated in this same prophesie: and seeing there is a communication of gifts, and what is made known to one, may and should (in a right manner) be made known to others, and that by write as well as by word: what reason can there be, that a Believer or Minister now may not, and should not improve the knowledge that others before him had, or now at a distance from him have, in the mystery of God, as well as by conference, he may make use of one that is alive, and present? And what other way is there than by reading to attain that? This cannot be denied to a private Christian, much lesse, to a Minister: and the many sad fruits of ignorance, error and confusion, which flow from the neglect of studie, shew the necessity of this. Neither is it for nought that parents are commanded to bring up their children in the knowledge and admonition of the Lord, which in Timothy's education, is commended: which could not be, if this way of acquiring knowledge were unlawful. And it is also confirmed by that property (given by the Lord Himself) of the Scribe, who is taught unto the Kingdom of God, Matth. 13. 52. that he bringeth out of his treasure things new and old: whereby it appeareth not only that he hath a treasure or stock laid up, but that he hath in it, what is old, as having been of long time useful to the Church, and what is new, and added thereunto by his own painfulnesse.

4. For the knowledge of humane learning, and the studying thereof, such as tongues, sciences, history, &c. although we conceive them not essential, and simply necessary for the being of every Minister, so as none could be a Minister without them; yet we conceive them useful exceedingly to all, and necessary for the Church, being used in a right subordination to the great end of edification. For although the Lord gave gifts of many tongues; yet are the Scriptures in two original languages only: and is it not necessary to be acquainted with these? Yet hath the Lord made use of no extraordinary gift of tongues to translate them into several languages; but of men who by His blessing in the way of study had acquired skil in these languages; which saith, that such a study is necessary to the Church: and indeed if that had been unlawful, many nations of the Gentiles had never had the Word, and so never had been Churches, had not this been: that therefore which is such a mean for the propagating of the Gospel, and so blessed of God, cannot be displeasing to Him, who could have appointed otherwise, and nor left this necessity on us, if He had thought meet. Beside, the right using of all sciences (even these which men by their corruption do most abuse) contribute exceedingly to advance edification: not by furnishing new weapons (the

(the Scripture is the only Sword;) but by enabling men to manage the old. These are to men, like skill to one that hath strength, to teach him how to handle his arms for his safety; like Physick to the body, to make all the members act to their several uses; and like the pulling out of something in the ear or eye, which marreth the hearing or seeing: So learning, is but the fitting of the natural faculties of the soul, of reason, and even of the gift formerly mentioned, to act neatly, and to be forth-coming accordingly, and subserviently to the orders and dictates of a sanctified judgement: whereas otherways a natural and habitual indisposition doth in much incapacitate men for the exercising even of that which they have. Neither can this be thought strange, seeing men are not born skilful in any common occupation, till it be taught them: it is no marvel therefore that they be undextrous as to the main things. And the writings of Heathens have been made use of for good ends by Paul, as his citing of them upon several occasions cleareth, and can the reading thereof hurt us? It is a good similitude which Basil useth (*Orat. ad adolosc.*) that as Dyers when they are to dy purple, do first put some common colour on the cloath to make it receive the purple the better; so, humane learning, is useful for fitting one for the more profitable study of Divinity. Only we say, This learning would be well regulated, so as to be made use of only for edification, men not flying to that as if the principles of Heathen Philosophers were more sure and strong than plain Scriptures, or as if, loathing the Scripture phrases and arguments, we would confirm Truths from more learned mediums out of these: much less would we reconcile their principles and the Scriptures by ascribing such a meaning to the Scripture, as must be consistent with them, as loather to brangle them in their Authority than the Scriptures of God; nor yet by using their phrases to derogate from Scripture-plainness or simplicity, (as often the miserably blind Schoolmen do) which is an high fault. It is abused also when a Minister thinketh himself something because of it, and despiseth these who are inferiour to him therein, or, when he accounteth that in himself, or in others, or sufficient for qualification, or, when he useth it for ostentation or getting of a name amongst hearers; that is is a poor learning, which maketh the message less intelligible, and less useful; and that is truly a learned Pastor, who can make Spiritual mysterious Truths most plain and palpable to the simplest hearer, as Luther once said, that he is the ablest Preacher who *pueriliter, trivialiter, populariter, & simplicissime docet.* Melc. Adam. in vit. Lutheri. Learning serveth to enable one in searching for Truth, to conceive what is solide or insolide, and to express it plainly; whereas that, is a great abuse of learning used by the Schoolmen (follow them in it who will) to make the plainest Scripture, or practical thing obscure with many doubts, questions, divers senses, objections, and many frothy unedifying notions, which have never profited them that have been occupied therein, and is contrary to the true end of learning, which ought to be edification. And often the most learned Preacher, in this sense, hath the most ignorant People. He is not the most learned and skilful Lawyer, School-master, &c. who knoweth most speculatively, but he who can reduce it best to practice, as the nature of his Calling doth require; So is it truly in the learning of a Minister, he who can inform, convince, or edifie others with most dexterity, is the most learned Minister, though, it may be, the less knowing man.

3. We said also, that Grace was necessary, and that he that thus carrieth the Lords message now should be holy, as they were, who of old carried His vessels: we do not rigidly call for this as for the former two, so as if no man could be a Minister without saving Grace, and unless he be truly regenerated: what was said in the former Epistle, doth guard against this; yet we may assert, that it is necessary by necessity of precept;

for, holiness is a qualification in that same roll with ability to convince gain-sayers, *Tit. 1. 8, 9.* And also by way of mids, it is useful and necessary in many respects. 1. For himself: he cannot have confidence of his Calling, or of his being approved of God in it, without this: though he may be called; yet he cannot act as called of God, and so must be much incapacitated in that respect. 2. For the work: which is of that nature that it requireth communion with God and a standing in His counsel, *Jer. 23. 18, 22.* otherwise, it may be accounted a stealing of his word without acknowledging of himself, *vers. 30.* And though these be necessary in any Calling, yet the nature of this sheweth them to be in a singular way necessary in it. 3. There cannot be that boldness in the message, especially where difficulties occur, without it. 4. For application of Truths, and speaking especially to the weary, This is necessary; that they may more natively take up the cases of others, apply the remedy to them, and sympathize with them, by making forth-coming the consolation to others, wherewith they have been comforted themselves, *2 Cor. 1. 9.* which is a main way whereby God fitteth His Ministers experimentally; and even the Head, in some respect, was thus qualified. From this, Luther said, that these three, *tentatio, meditatio, and oratio*, were requisite in a Minister: and they who want this holiness, are certainly exceeding defective. Further, in respect of his having fruits, it is most necessary, these being often blessed of the Lord with many, and others with all their learning, but with few, as in these two Churches appeareth, beside a Ministers Prayers having influence on the hearers profiting, as well as his Preaching; and he being to Pray for them, and to account their thriving to be an answer of his Praying, as well as the fruit of his Preaching, as in Pauls practice is manifest: what can the unrenewed Minister do here? Can he ly between the Porch and the Altar? can he strive without ceasing in Prayer to God for them? and therefore must he be much incapacitated to be profitable in this respect? Yea, for the credit of the Ministry, it is requisite that he be of good report, even to these without, otherwise his word will not have much weight: and what will gain such a good report without holiness? Hypocrisie often is not much convincing, neither is it continuing, whereas holiness even in a common servant will adorn the Gospel, much more in a Minister, who is a city set on a hill, and cannot be hid.

Again; we say, That this qualification of holiness should be greatly respected both in a peoples calling, or choosing of a Minister, and in a Presbyteries ordaining of one for a People; so that if they should respect all other qualifications, and yet never enquire for this, they are exceeding faulty: and although holiness be not simply necessary to a Minister, as if without it he were not to be accounted so, when lawfully admitted, as is said; yet we conceive that neither a People, nor a Presbytery should pass over that qualification in their choice of Admission, so as to make no enquiry for it, or not to respect it, where, it may be, there is nothing to sway any to that opinion of the man in well grounded charity, but somewhat more to the contrary: for, the people are not left to call whom they will; if it were a Deacon, he is to be a man full of the holy Ghost, *Act. 6.* And this place being the first clear evidence of a peoples interest in their calling of a Minister, this rule for their proceeding must be of force also. Again, it being such a great Trust, as to be intrusted with the Oracles of God, and with the souls of People, can he be thought fit to endeavour the saving of the souls of others, who yet maketh no conscience in taking heed to his own? This is the Apostles reasoning, *1 Tim. 3. 2, 3, 4, 5.* *if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?* which is proposed by way of Question, to shew the unanswerableness of that reasoning, by which He presseth the observing of the former qualifications. And certainly



And certainly these two, are not without weighty reasons put together, *Act. 20. 28.* and *1 Tim. 4. 16.* Take heed to thy self, and to the Flock and Doctrine. But to shew this, that who careth not for the one, will never natively and naturally care for the other. Especially, that word, which followeth being considered, *So shalt thou save thyself and those that hear thee*, intimating, that carelessness in his own walk, may not only mar his own salvation, but also the salvation of his Hearers, seeing these two ordinarily are carried-on joyntly, as in this Epistle: And, can people dispence with this, to have only a form of Ordinances, not caring whether their Ministers have fruit amongst them or not? or that the profit be to many or few? and yet there cannot much be expected (what ever God may sovereignly do) from a man that standeth not in Gods counsel, *Jer. 23. 22.* and therefore turneth not many from their iniquity: neither can any expect that the Lord will approve that he should be made a steward in His house, and an under-father to His Children, who yet upon no charitable ground can be accounted a child himself, and what confidence can there be, that a man not esteemed gracious, shall either Christianly carry in the outward form of Religion, or yet keep soundness in the Faith? and will they not be accessory to these evils, who have hazarded so much on them, who are not worthy of any such Trust?

The considering of this, as it relateth to a Presbyteries duty, will confirm it further. We say, they ought not (whoever call, or whatever ones parts be) to proceed to admit men to the Ministry, without respect to this qualification of holiness: my meaning is not, that search in extraordinary ways should be made for knowing of mens conversion, or, that infallibility should be expected in this, or, that any particular evidences in such a measure or degree should be pitched on, without which nothing is to be satisfying, (for there are degrees, as was said) but because, even Schollars are naturally sinful, and gifts do not mortifie corruption, nor edifie, but as they are well improvén; and seeing often by mens profanity, good gifts do much hurt in the Church; and seeing there can be no ground to expect the right improvement of gifts by one not supposed to be gracious, Therefore trial would be, 1. To clear that he be not profane, and that nothing can be charged on him. And, 2. That there are some things making him look holy-like, and giving ground, in a discerning charity, to esteem so of him, that what ever afterward he prove, they may have peace in what they have done. And lastly, that some fit time and way be taken purposely for trying of this. This is clear, 1. From the many directions that are given to Ministers concerning this one thing, in the Epistles of Paul to Timothy and Titus, where they are expressly limited in their proceeding to this, *that he be holy, 1 Tim. 3. 2, &c. and Tit. 1. 8.* And this holiness is not only described negatively, that he be *blameless, not given to wine, &c. vers. 6. and 7.* but positively, that he *have a good name, be sober, just, holy*: which sheweth, that it consisteth not merely in negatives. 2. It is evident that it is to be tried: because even a Deacon also is to be proved, *1 Tim. 5. 10.* (which also supponeth, that a Minister is much more to be proved) and then let him use the office, if he be found (that is, after trial) to be blameless: and so there is a proof to be had of this qualification, as of others. 3. It appeareth by his excluding of a Novice from this charge, *vers. 6.* (that is, one lately brought in to the faith) as not being yet able to bear it, or as not being well known what he might prove: and there being to us a proportionableness, and likeness in some respects, betwixt the Novice then, (they being all accounted Believers) and one that seemeth now to profess more seriously than the generality of others, it saith, he would be of a standing profession that should be admitted to this Charge. And, 4. That which is, *Chap. 5. 22. Lay hands suddenly on no man, &c.* doth confirm this also; and that is, not only lest he be not of parts, but lest he through untenderness abuse

his parts, and then become guilty, as the reason subjoyned, cleareth. And (to meet that objection which one might have, to wit, *It is not rashly done; for, nothing can be laid to his charge*) Paul saith some mens sins are at the first obvious; but some (saith he) will follow after: and therefore will take time before they be discovered. Therefore there is need of wariness and trial to bring them out, as Reverend Mr. Dickson expoundeth the place. And can this be so to be slighted in Ministers proceeding, which Paul so frequently presseth, not only to observe when it is palpable, but to search for it, where it is not so obvious? And if it be so requisite even for a Deacon, what will it be for a Minister, whose Station leadeth him more immediately to the things of greatest concernment? And as the Apostles appointed, so practised they, *Act. 6. Seek ye out men full of the holy Ghost, them we will ordain*, intimating, concerning others, that they would not ordain them, So is the qualification proposed for the Apostle, *Act. 1.* although Judas in Gods sovereign wisdom had been employed; yet there is an other rule given them to walk by, than he taketh to himself; they must take one of these who had given best proof of their integrity, *vers. 23.* And through all the Epistles, when Paul is recommending Ministers, there is ever some evidence of their sanctification given: whereby he would let us know, what weight is truly in that qualification for commending of men for the Ministry; and what sort of men others should recommend after him. And there are also many reasons which may be gathered from what is said, to make Ministers very careful in this, That holiness be well looked unto in Instruments, as they would expect an open door to be set to them by the Lord, as he doth here.

If any should say, 1. That this looketh like the way of rigid trying of Church-members, and seemeth to favour that conceit. *Ans. 1.* I am not speaking of the manner of proceeding, but of the thing, what ever way any Judicatory or persons in Christian prudence shall take to satisfy themselves in the particular, That I conceive can be regulated by no certain directions: for, that will be fit in one case, which will not be in another, &c. 2. Although there be a proving and trying here called-for; yet it will not hold as necessary to all members: because there is not the like ground; nay, nor such precepts nor practices for trial of members, as there is in this: and were it so clear for members, I suppose it were hard to shift it. Yea, 3. This doth overturn that rigidity and scrupulosity concerning Church-members, it is so far from strengthening of it: for, if there be somewhat singular required of a Minister, and if one that is already a Church-member be yet to be proved, if probably he be holy ere he be a Minister (so that one may be a Church-member for his holiness, and yet unfit, in respect of his being defective in this qualification, to be a Minister; yea, a Deacon) Then is there not such rigid and accurate search to be made for positive evidences in every Church-member: for then, there could be no addition to it, or further length to go: But from this, it is clear that something is required in the trial of an Intrañt to the Ministry, more than of one to be admitted into the Church: for one may be warrantably admitted to the Church, who yet may be unfit in this respect to be a Minister: therefore the extending of this conclusion to all the members indifferently, is unwarrantable: for, this new trying of them, supposeth the former not to be so exact, and yet all this probation is to be of such as are within.

If any should further object, That this layeth on that which is impossible. *Ans.* There is no such thing intended. But, 1. it is more than is needful to every Church-member. 2. It is somewhat that needeth proof and trial, and is not to be taken on trust: but the manner of trial we leave. 3. It is somewhat that may warrant the conscience, not to determine infallibly concerning such a persons state; but concerning a mans own act in

In a deliberate well grounded concurring in his ordination; So that there be no ground for a challenge afterward, being put to say, it was sudden, and so to charge himself as accessory unto, and guilty of, his sins also, if afterward he miscarry: which is intended by that precept, 1 Tim. 5. 22, &c.

If it be objected further, Then there would be few Ministers entered, and many Congregations would be desolate. That great Patern and Patron of Learning and Piety, *Trochrege*, when he moveth this objection to himself (which sheweth that it hath been ordinary in all times so to dispute against this duty) Answereth, that it is not so much to be respected, *quot*, or, how many be in the Ministry, as *quales & qui*, that is, who, or of what qualifications they be. Therefore (saith he) it had been the advantage of the Ministry that they had been ever fewer, rather than that many who are in that station should have been admitted to it: for (saith he) some became not only uselesse themselves, but do incapacitate others, and make the Ministry despicable before all by their carriage. And indeed it is often found so, that many Congregations had been better still to have waited for what providence might have ordered for them, than to have been planted as they were. Many excellent things hath he to this purpose, *pag. 1187, &c.* particularly, *pag. 1107, &c.*

We are perswaded, that whatever profane men think of holinesse, that yet the people who desire to have their souls saved, will be loath to have a blind-Guide, who, by falling into the ditch, may hazard others, or, one that may heal their wound slightly; or at best, point out the way to them, but in little joyn with them in it. And especially, that Ministers of the Gospel, who know what esteem Christ hath of souls, and what difficulty it is for themselves to walk singly in this Ministrie, even though they mind their own salvation: and what native and natural sympathy is called for betwixt a Minister and His Flock; and who are well acquainted with the devices of the devil, who aimeth to make havock of souls by an ungodly, as well as by an erroneous Ministry; and also are laying to heart and seriously minding their reckoning to Jesus Christ at His appearing, for the souls of such Congregations, as they have had access to provide with Ministers, whether his Sheep were committed to a friend, or an enemy, to one that loved him, and so would feed the Lambs; or one that loved and sought his own things, (as all men in nature do) and so would feed himself. We are perswaded (we say) that such will tremble to be accessory to such hainous affronting of Jesus Christ, or such cruel betraying of poor souls in committing them to an ignorant, or unfaithful Guide, who may fall in the ditch with them. And seeing this is of main concernment to the advancement of Christs Gospel, and the edification of peoples souls, to have Ministers according to the Lords heart, and not mens, to feed the people; and a special promise subjoyned to His marrying of a Land, *Jer. 3. 14.* and an evidence of His dwelling with a people, Let all such therefore, whether People or Ministers, who have a hand in this, be obtested in the fear of the Lord, and by the coming and appearance of our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of His Sheep, that they be ware and circumspect in this most concerning-businesse, as they would not in that day be guilty of the blood of many souls, that unholy Ministers cannot but be guilty of; and as they would not be accounted partakers with them in all their sins. And, no question, this command amongst others, is implied in that charge to *Timothy*, 1 Tim. 6. 13. 14. 21. And it is very observable, that in these Epistles, while he giveth directions to *Timothy*, and *Titus* in the name of all Ministers, which are to be obeyed to the end of the world, he so often chargeth, more than in other Epistles, That these commands should be done without partiality; which certainly sheweth, that Ministers must especially reckon for their observing thereof. Yes, that charge,

is particularly given in reference to this duty, 1 Tim. 5. 21. and 22. *I charge thee, &c. Do nothing by partiality: withal subjoyning, Lay hands suddenly on no man: which (as Calvin observeth) is upon this ground given, because men often are ready to be partial in admissions. Therefore, saith the Apostle, whatever others do, do not thou partake of that sin with them. And though that Reverend forecited Author Mr. Boyd, be every way most moderate; yet, pag. 1108. doth he censure the preposterous moderation of some good men, who are too charitable in the matter of admission of men to the Ministry; and directly asserteth, that in trial of Spirits for such an end, not only the Doctrine, sed & animorum motus, consilia, conatus, are also to be proven. And if nothing satisfying appear which may hold forth Gods call, although it were for many years, it is to be forborn. Nec enim tam refert quot sint hoc Ministerio fungentes, quam qui sint, & quantâ cum curâ delecti atque probati; præstatque plurimis abdicatis, vel unum aliquem admitti, qui sit unus ex mille, &c. quam plurimis indifferenter admittis, ex mille vix unum, qualem cupias invenire. And thereafter, citeth our Lords practice, Luk. 9. 57. who though most tender of the Churches edification, and in a time when the Harvest was very great, and the Labourers but few, yet doth reject two, who seemingly offered themselves with affection to the work, and presseth one, not so seemingly forward as the other two. In all which, and in much more to this purpose he doth excellently enlarge himself as in a thing of most grave concernment to the Churches edification. His famous Master also, Divine Mr. *Kallock*, doth most pathetically presse this; and particularly in his Lectures upon the Lords last Sermon and solemn Prayer, *Joh. 17. Left. 23.* Although this be true, and will not, we hope, by any be called in question; yet there are two things which possibly to some may need more particularly to be spoken to; seeing it is easie to run in extremes. The first is, What length may be attained, or is to be aimed at in this trial of a Ministers Sanctification, by vertue of that precept, *Lay hands suddenly on no man*? Secondly, How it may be made to appear, that seeing so much is attainable in this case, that as much is not to be sought after in the trial of private members? We shall therefore, before we leave this, speak a word to these.*

To the first we say, 1. That by vertue of that precept, there is no infallibility to be expected nor pretended unto: because there is no such thing possible: nor doth the Lord in His Word give such symptoms and evidences as may found such a judgment or decision of an other persons gracious estate: nor is this to be enquired for, as if the validity of a persons ordination did depend upon the same: for, ordination may be valid, where no Sanctification is, as was formerly said; But it is such a trial and probation as is opposite to rashness and hastinesse, and may give ground of quietnesse unto these that go about this work; even though the person should not be found afterward answerable. Because the ground of their peace, is not the reality on truth of the thing; but it is (to say so) the reality of such and such evidences, which after trial are found indeed to be so, although possibly they be not sincere.

2. We say, That negative evidences, or negative knowledge, that is, that we ourselves know no evil of the person, and such like, will not be sufficient to exoner us in proceeding to ordination, according to this precept: for, that may be, where a man is not known at all. Beside that will not give ground to make him be accounted of good report, holy, faithful, &c. which are the qualifications required in him to whom the word of truth is to be committed. Also the Scripture holdeth forth such qualifications as are positive, to be enquired, for in this case: which were uselesse, if negatives were sufficient. And certainly there is a negative holinesse at least required in a private member; yet it is clear that more is to be enquired



quired for in an Officer; yea, even a Deacon is not to be admitted without special qualifications, which are not requisite in ordinary members. Amongst other words, *Ambrose* saith on this place, *non enim sufficit si sine crimine sit, quia merita ejus debent praeire bonorum operum ut dignus sit ad ordinationem.*

3. We say then, That something positive is attainable, and is to be enquired for: which though it be not infallibly convincing of the persons state; yet may be sufficient, to quiet the mind against the challenges of rash & sudden proceeding in that matter. Which, in the general, may be drawn to these three, 1. That there be a search in the external positives that are given in the Word; the knowledge whereof may be attained by search. 2. There may be some observation of a mans way, and tract of carriage, from which some discovery may be made of a mans equableness, singleness and spirituality in such duties. 3. There may be some discovery attained of a mans universality in these duties so qualified, by considering his carriage in reference to divers cases and conditions and divers persons, both such as are more tender, and others. That these are attainable cannot be denied, at least so far as is necessary for the scope foreaid. And certainly, that precept must be understood to require proof and trial in this, so far as is possibly attainable (otherways a man cannot be thought to be sufficiently exonerated in his duty) as the reason subjoyned confirmeth: especially in such cases where neither the good works, nor the evil of some men, are open before hand. And these being attainable, as is said, It will follow then that they are to be enquired into: *Judicious and Learned Mr. wood* in his Peece against *Mr. Lockier*, doth asseert, *That there are some more eminent outward works and attings in Religion, and Piety, by which, men (so far as is competent to men to judge) may be warrantably judged positively gracious, pag. 142. and sheweth how this is to be attained, pag. 152, 153. in these words, There is requisite some seemingness of Spiritual sincerity in a mans profession, id est, that he doth it from a Spiritual principle, upon Spiritual motives, and for a Spiritual end: but a meer, sober, not mocking, serious profession without more, is not a positive appearance of Spiritual supernatural sincerity. Which sheweth, that such a thing is possible; and experience also doth confirm this.*

4. We say, That in this precept it is implied, that these positive evidences are not soon to be trusted; but that men are seriously and diligently to enquire in the reality of them, for the quieting of themselves rationally in concluding that he is so and so qualified. And this we conceive is the great scope of that precept: for the general, that a Minister should be eminently qualified even in reference to Godliness, I suppose will not be denied by any: This miscarriage is ordinarily in the application, and that is not purposedly to admit an unholy man to be a Minister, but to account a man holy without ground, and thereupon suddenly to proceed. The Apostles scope therefore is principally to guard against this, that such thoughts of a persons fitness be not suddenly and without trial admitted and entertained. And we suppose, that although particular evidences be not insisted on; yet trial in the general, seriously and with circumspectness gone-about, will do much to quiet the mind in reference to its own act. And this is so understood by *Chrysostome*, *Theophilact*, and others, as importing a command to try, and try again.

If it were more particularly enquired, What these positive evidences are, which may be warrantably looked for in one that is to be admitted to the Ministry? *Ans.* Although by proportion what may evidence one man to be gracious unto another (so far as is requisite for one man to judge of another) That will hold here; and though there be some generals laid down, which include many particulars as to be holy, full of the holy Ghost, *Act. 6.* such as have given good proof of their faithfulness and constancy in Religion, *Act. 1. vers. 21, 22.* and such

like; Yet beside these, the Scripture hath pitched upon some particular characters for the discovery of this.

First, He is to be a man that ruleth well his own house, *1 Tim. 3. vers. 4, 5.* which doth imply a mans faithfulness and proficableness, as a Christian, in whatsoever private station he hath been in formerly; so it is to be looked, how he hath done the duty of a son to parents, of a student in his studies, of a private Christian in his private walk with others, or how he hath behaved himself in families, or in other places wherein he hath had more near access to be edifying, and such like. This one character putteth to take trial, 1. of a mans zeal and sincerity in studying edification according to his place. 2. Of his prudence in manning and ordering what he may meet with. And, 3. of his Authority, how probably he may be able to keep people in a kindly subjection to Christs Ordinances, as the particular observing of that place will bear forth: which speaketh not only of his fitness to teach; but also to govern in the house of God. And it would seem that though always the Church is not to be refrained from calling one that is young, and without a family; yet by a mans living sometime after his going through private studies, before his coming to the Ministry, or having a family to govern, there might be much more access confidently to discern a Called-minister in respect of this qualification: for, as the Apostle reasoneth, *1 Tim. 3. 5. If a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?*

Secondly, He is to be tried according to these marks where-with a Christian may be tried, such as to be vigilant, to be sober, (which looketh to sobriety in his whole carriage) not only to be blameless, but to be of good behaviour, given to hospitality, not greedy or covetous, patient, &c. *1 Tim. 3. 3. Tit. 1. 7, 8.* In which qualifications, not only is to be tried what are mens practices; but what are their distempers, or infirmities; what are their natural inclinations, and dispositions, and such like: and if these be froward, except by the evidences of the opposite Graces, there be hope that they shall be subdued, there can be no confidence to proceed. For, a Minister should be meek gentle, no brawler, &c.

Thirdly, He is one that must have a good report from them that are without, *1 Tim. 3. 7.* which importeth a shining eminency in his conversation, so as to be convincing even to wicked men: from whom seriousness and sincerity will get a testimony, when lightness and luke-warmness will be abhorred even by them.

Fourthly, He is to be a lover of good men, *Tit. 1. 8.* It is a mark of a Believer to love the Children of God; and here it is made a character whereby one, that is to be called to the Ministry, ought to be tried: and it is such a love to them as is demonstrable and evidenced to others, by their conversing with them, estimation of them, and that in opposition to others, whom in that respect they love not, though possibly their natural ties to such may be moe. This character, doth first suppose a capacity in them to discern good men beside others. And, secondly, a principle within, making them to love and esteem of such: which, where they are in reality, are both commendable in themselves, and cannot but be some way discernable to others; and therefore may be the more warrantably observed and laid weight upon, and when they are wanting, proceeding may, yea, should be at the greater stand and non-entry.

A fifth evidence is, That he be no Novice, *1 Tim. 3. 6.* which holdeth out that he ought to be of some settled standing in the profession of Godliness; at least, there would be ground to think him so: which cannot well be, if the man have been but as others in his education, and possibly come by reason of the thoughts of a Ministry to have some firer outward carriage than others; when yet, as to the practice of Religion, he may be but a meer Novice, and so give no ground to found a rational charity for expecting any thriving of the work of Grace in his heart, or of the work of the Ministry in his hands.

When

When these external evidences are found, Then Ministers ought to reflect upon all to see if any thing can be gathered concerning the sincerity of their end, spiritualness of their walk, and such like, as by the words of these two eminent Divines formerly cited doth appear. And because this cannot be discerned by one act or two; or, in a month or two: therefore it is necessary to take time, and to consider the equableness of such a mans way for satisfying of themselves concerning him. And though it is not like that each Minister can come to a well grounded knowledge in reference to the Admission of every one, by his own particular acquaintance; yet in such a case, it is to be supplied by the testimony of such, who being able to discern, and thoroughly satisfied themselves upon solide grounds, dare confidently give testimony of the good behavior and Christian carriage of such a person, according to the former characters: and such testimony, when given, ought to have weight. Therefore we see that in Scripture, the faithful Servants of God used to commend such, as were of their acquaintance, to others: and such recommendations wanted never weight. Onely concerning this, we say, That seeing recommendations and testimonies may have much influence upon the good or ill of the Church. This would not be overly gone about; but these caveats would be observed, 1. That when men testify positively such and such qualifications to be in any, they would have ground of satisfaction in their own consciences that such things are true, and consistent in their knowledge. 2. As this testimony would be on knowledge; so the matter testified, would be weighty, and such as being true evidenceth some good beginning, or appearance of the work of Grace. There are many testimonies given thorow Pauls Epistles to several persons; but we will still find them have these two, 1. The thing testified, is something that doth indeed commend them as Christians; as having love to God, and to the edification of souls, and such like. 2. It's upon knowledge; yea oftentimes from such evidences as were discernable even to others, such as suffering for Christ, distributing to the Saints, painfulness and diligence in what they have been employed about, and such like. On the other side, there is also need of taking heed what testimonies be received, And, 1. That the testimony be full, bearing out these characters sufficiently in the bosome thereof: otherwise it can be no proof of them, whoever be the testifier, and it may be, it were not impertinent to do it in the Apostles words. 2. Respect is to be had to these who give the testimony. And, 3. To the ground upon which they give it, to wit, if it be of their own certain knowledge that they do testify such things; or, only upon the report of others, and such like considerations. Wherein faithful Presbyteries will employ their zeal and prudence for the satisfying of themselves; and so there is the less need to insist particularly in them.

Now, as to the second, if any should ask, what reason there can be more to enquire thus in reference to Ministers, than in reference to members? and if the one will not follow upon the grounds that are laid down for inferring the other? We answer, It is enough to say that this enquiry in reference to Ministers is commanded, and the other not. Neither will any objector, I suppose, be able to give such precepts for the tryal of Church-members, as have been laid down for this tryal in reference to Ministers. It is observable which that great vindicator of this truth, concerning the admission of Church-members without such exact tryal, doth answer to this objection; I mean Learned Mr. Wood, in his Examination and Confutation of Mr. Lockyers Little-stone, pag. 80. 81. Mr. Lockyer had made the same objection; which he answereth thus, *All that Mr. Lockyer here bringeth in concerning admitting persons into Offices in the Church, is idly and impertinently alledged to the point in hand: we acknowledge that none ought to be put in such Offices, but such as give evidences of all manner of Godly conversation; we have an express*

*and full rule for this, 1 Tim. 3. And hands ought not to be laid upon any man, without a fore-going tryal and proof of these things. But where will ye shew us in all the Scripture from the one end to the other such a rule requiring such qualifications in persons, and such a tryal of them before, and in relation to their admission into the fellowship of the visible Church; and to be under Pastoral care and the Ministry of the word? If he could shew us this, either in precept or approved practice, we should soon yield and be at an end of this controversy; But this he cannot, nor ever will be able to shew; and therefore the reasoning from the care and accuracy to be used in trying persons, who are already in the Church, in relation to admitting them to places of Office, unto admission of persons into the Society of the visible Church, is unreasonable. Thus far he convincingly to the point in hand. It is observable also, that these amongst the Ancients, who have said and done most against the Novatians and Donatists, have been yet most pressing and peremptory in this, to wit, that none with any blemish should minister in the holy things, as in the writings of Cyprian and Augustine is clear. This is enough to remove any such Objection: Yet for further satisfaction, we say, That there want not palpable reasons for this difference, as,*

1. When a member is admitted, he is received to be trained up in Christs House or School; and therefore if he profess himself docile, and subject himself to Ordinances, it cannot be expected that he will be, or can be accurate before he have learned: for, it is within the Church that properly Christianity is taught. It is not so in the admitting of one to be a Minister: for, he is to be entered to be a Teacher, Therefore more must be required of him: and he is supposed to have been a Scholler in Christs School, and under His Ordinances for some considerable time; and therefore more may justly be expected and sought for from him.

2. When a Professor seriously desireth entry to the Church or Baptism, he doth it by pleading a title or right thereto according to Christs warrant: wherein a Church-judicatory is obliged in justice to decide, and that legally according to his title and right: and if he be found to have such a right, they cannot upon any consideration justly refuse him: But in trying of a man for the Ministry, there is no such title and right which can be pleaded: For, 1. This is no mans particular privilege, which he, as a Saint, or Professor, may claim by vertue of the Covenant, or Christs institution, as he may do the Sacraments; for, many have right to these that have none to this. 2. A particular person may be kepted from the Ministry and not be wronged, even although he be honest; because in admitting thereto, Church-officers are to walk according to the general ground of the edification of the Church: and therefore when it is not for the edification of the Body, a man may be forborn (to speak so) and not admitted to such and such a particular charge, at least, without the wronging of any just title of his: which cannot be in Baptism, if the man be qualified accordingly as is called for in such a case. For in deciding anent the admission of a particular member, the Question runneth, If he have what giveth title to Membership; But in deciding concerning a mans admission to a particular Ministry, beside any qualifications of his as a Church-member, it is to be considered, if it be expedient for, and edifying to the Church, that such a man be admitted to be a guide. And therefore there is more of Christian prudence and deliberation required in the deciding of this, than in the other, where meer right hath place.

Lastly, This difference may be observed, That in deciding the first, to wit, the mans right, Church-officers must decide according to what judicially is made out; for, a person that giveth in his title, looking like a serious Professor, he cannot be refused, although men have onely a negative knowledge of his sincerity: yet this cannot be admitted in a Minister, where want of clearness, and positive satisfaction is enough to keep a man



man from positive deciding for the admission of a Minister. All which may be thus illustrated: suppose some in an Incorporation or City, should claim to be Burgesses thereof by virtue of their sufficient title and right thereto; in this case the Judges were to decide strictly according to Law, as they found these titles to be made out, or not: and it were injustice to refuse them that privilege, if they were found to have right to the same: but, if an Incorporation or City were to choose out of all the Burgesses, some to Govern, to be the Treasurer, or the like; the case would be quite different: for, so men were not here to

decide what were any mans particular right, but what were good and expedient for the whole Body; and so many might be past without any prejudice to them; which could not be in the first. In this last election also, men walk not so much by what is judicially made out of the fitness of any person, but as they are satisfied ament their qualifications and fitness, by their knowledge of them, and acquaintance with them in the private course of their carriage: Both which will well agree to the case of the admission of Ministers, as it differeth from the admission of Members.

## LECTURE III.

Verf. 14. *And unto the Angel of the Church of the Laodiceans, write, These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.*

15. *I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.*

16. *So then because thou art luke-warm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.*

17. *Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing: and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.*

18. *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see.*

19. *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten, be zealous therefore and repent.*

20. *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

21. *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*

22. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.*

**T**His is the last of the seven Epistles, and is directed to the Angel of the Church of the Laodiceans. It containeth the discovery of an exceeding desperate condition, and a most sharp threatening for the same: yet, which is wonderful, it hath a most excellent advice and counsel unto this luke-warm Church.

The Division is common with that of the rest of the Epistles. The Inscription is, *vers. 14.* The Body of the Epistle, is from that unto the 21. The Conclusion is, *vers. 21, 22.*

In the Inscription, *vers. 14.* the Lord taketh these two Titles to Himself, 1. Thus saith the *Amen*, which is expounded by the next words, *the faithful and true witness*, that is, He who being Truth it self and cannot lie, as He cannot be mistaken in taking up the condition of any, although never so secret; it is he that directeth this Epistle. *Amen*, being an Hebrew word, is frequently used even in the New Testament, as a sign, or evidence of the confirmation of somewhat that hath been spoken; or as a testimony of the sincerity of the speaker in wishing seriously for something which he hath been praying for: therefore often it is used in the close of Prayer; and is here applied to Christ, to shew that in Him there is not *Yea* and *Nay*, but *Yea* and *Amen*, as the word is, *2 Corinth. 1. 19, 20.* The second Title; is, *the beginning of the Creation of God*: the word rendered *beginning* here, is not to be taken passively, as if it were to be understood thus, the first thing that was created: for, the Greek word will not admit that; but it is to be taken actively, that is, thus

saith He who gave a being and beginning to all things that were created: in which respect, it is said, *Joh. 1. 3. All things that were made, were made by Him.* He taketh the first stile in this place, because He was to discover a hidden hypocrisie, and to bear sharp testimony against this Church: therefore at the entry He removeth all prejudice that might be against His Testimony. He taketh the second Title, to be a ground of Faith to them, for expecting a recovery from their deadness upon the terms offered by Him, seeing He is omnipotent, and can give a being to things that have none.

In the Body of the Epistle, we have these four. 1. Their case is proposed, and aggravated, *vers. 15.* 2. They are threatened, *vers. 16.* and the reason thereof is given, *vers. 17.* 3. The cure is proposed, and commended by way of counsel, *vers. 18.* And lastly, The improving thereof, and the practice of some other things needful to their case, are pressed, *vers. 19, 20.*

Their case is in short, *Thou art neither cold nor hot*, but, as it is, *vers. 16. Thou art luke-warm.* By *cold* here, is understood the want of all form and profession; and so, a being in their natural and heathenish condition without any change: This is clear from the scope. By *hot*, is understood not onely to have profession, but to have power, warmth and life therewith, and so to have the change through. The condition of this Church, was neither altogether without a profession, nor yet having power with a profession; But having renounced,

nounced groſs Idolatry and profaniry, and having been kept free from corruptions in Doctrine, ſhe ſatisfied her ſelf in that formal profeſſion, without ſinglenefs and zeal in the performance of theſe duties which ſhe went about: therefore they are called *luke-warm*, as if ſome way the cold had been put off them: and yet not being thoroughly warm and hot, they continued to be luke-warm, which making water moſt loathſome to the ſtomack, it is here alluded unto, to ſhew how loathſome this indifferency in the practice of Religion was to our Lord Jeſus. That this is their very condition, is clear from the ſcope, and from the amplification following, where it appeareth they had ſome form, and therefore thought well of themſelves; and yet were indeed miſerable and wretched under the ſame. Alſo, the Lords provoking them to be *zealous*, *verſ. 19.* ſheweth, that their fault did conſiſt mainly in what was oppoſite to this. And ſo their condition will be like *Iſraels* in the dayes of *Elias*, *1 King. 18. 21.* as halting between two opinions, that is, neither altogether forſaking Religion, nor yet ſeriously following the ſame; or, as it is ſaid of *Ephraim*, *Hof. 7. 8.* he was *as a cake unturned*, that is, having the one ſide ſomewhat hot and baken, but the other cold and raw. Onely this is the difference, that indifferency of theirs was in reſpect of Doctrine, this is mainly in reſpect of practice.

The Lord aggregeth the hatefullneſs of this condition in the words following, *I would thou wert cold or hot*, that is, although ye think your ſelves much better than others, becauſe of your formal profeſſion; yet ſuch hypocrify, is more hateful to me than the want of the form of Religion altogether. So this, *I would thou wert hot or cold*, is not to be underſtood of Chriſts will, as preſcribing to them a duty: for ſo, it cannot be thought that he commandeth them to be cold; nor doth it imply any will or deſire to be in Him of ſuch things ſimply; (for it cannot be thought that He is ſo indifferent concerning theſe extreams) but it is to be underſtood as His expreſſing of His loathing of their condition, after the manner of men: and doth hold out this, that He doth eſteem ſuch a hypocritical profeſſion to be indeed more diſhonourable to Him, than if profeſſion had never been taken on. That this is the meaning thereof, appeareth by theſe conſiderations. 1. That Chriſt here is following a ſimilitude uſual among men, to ſhew the abominableneſs of the thing in it ſelf, and it is not rightly to be preſſed in every part of the ſimilitude in reference to Him beyond the ſcope. 2. Becauſe he putteth *cold* and *hot* in the ſame ballance together: ſo that whatever difference otherways be in His eſtimation of being *hot*, beyond that of being *cold*; yet in this place they are made equal, and nothing is aſſerted concerning the one, but is alſo aſſerted concerning the other: which doth clearly ſhew, that the Lords expreſſion is to be underſtood after the manner of men, (as was ſaid) that is, as men uſe to expreſs their hating of any thing, by this, *I wiſh it were*, or had been any other way: that ſame is the Lords intent here. I cannot therefore but ſomewhat wonder, that a Learned man (*Joannes Dalles* in his *Apologetic. &c.*) doth draw this place of the Lords wiſhing that *Laodicea* were hot, to confirm that aſſertion of the Lords having a will and deſire of the ſalvation of all men, beſides His ſignifying of what is acceptable to Him as conſidered in it ſelf, by His Word.

If it be asked how hypocrify or luke-warmneſs may be ſaid to be more diſhonourable to the Name of God, than the want of a profeſſion altogether? It may be answered in theſe three reſpects, 1. Where no profeſſion is at all, the Name of Chriſt is not ſo concerned, as where it is: and therefore by any miſcarriage of ſuch, it is not ſo reflected upon, and made obnoxious to reproach, as it is in reſpect of theſe who have ſome way given up their names to Religion. It is on this account that in *Exek. 20. 39.* the Lord doth diſcharge the people of *Iſrael* to pol-

lute His holy Name with their gifts, and biddeth them, *go ſerve ye every one his Idols, &c.* which is not to give them allowance to run to Idolatry; but it is to ſhew them, that if they would not wholly cleave to Him, His Name would be leſs polluted and diſhonoured by their direct betaking of themſelves to Idolatry, than it was by mixing His Worſhip, and the worſhip of Idols together. 2. The nature of the ſin it ſelf, hath alſo ſome aggravations in it, which maketh it exceedingly loathſome to Jeſus Chriſt, and diſhonourable to Him beyond the condition of ſuch as have no profeſſion at all: for, ſuch a perſon indeed is really cold, and without any Religion, as others are; And hath theſe two things beſide, 1. He is a counterfitter of Religion, and that before God: therefore, *Acts 5. 3. &c.* ſuch are ſaid to tempt God, and lie to the holy Ghoſt; becauſe they preſumptuouſly intrude themſelves in a profeſſion, as if they were ſomething, being yet indeed nothing; and ſo tempteth the Majeſty of God ſingularly to take notice of them, and diſcover them, or otherways ſome way to lye under the imputation elther of no diſcerning, or of approving ſuch unſoundneſs, as if it were Religion. Secondly, Ordinarily ſuch, though they be poor, yet are they proud, preſumptuous and haughty, in reſpect of their form; for, they ſay they are rich and increaſed with goods, &c. *verſ. 17.* which no perſon without all form can be ſo readily tempted unto: Now the Lord abhorreth this empty pride above any thing. A third reſpect in which hypocrify is hateful beyond the want of all form, is, that it maketh ſuch a perſons conviction, converſion and ſalvation more difficult than if they had had no profeſſion at all: for if ſo, it might have been more eaſy to have convinced them of their emperneſs, and to have brought them to Chriſt, than in the caſe of their formality and pride. And thus not only is the caſe of hypocrify more dangerous to themſelves, but it is more diſhonourable to God, becauſe it ſome way fruſtrateth the end of His Ordinances amongſt ſuch. And therefore the Lord uſually doth prefer the Publicanes and Harlots in this reſpect, to the Scribes and Pharifees: becauſe ſuch were more eaſily convinced, and brought to ſome fruitfullneſs under the Ordinances, than Scribes and Pharifees were, who rejected the counſel of God againſt themſelves. Thus (*Matth. 21. 31, 32.*) Publicanes and Harlots are ſaid to go unto the Kingdom of Heaven before the Scribes and Pharifees, becauſe they believed *Jehus* Preaching, which the other did not.

The ſecond thing in the Body of the Epiſtle, is, the Lords threatning of them for this ill, by an expreſſion ſuitable to the ill, *verſ. 16.* So then, becauſe thou art luke-warm, neither cold nor hot, I will ſpew thee out of my mouth: which is in ſum this, ſeeing then thou art in a luke-warm temper, which uſually mens ſtomacks can more hardly keep than what is cold, or what is hot, but muſt ſpew out the ſame as a thing loathſome unto them; ſo will I in ſome ſingular and extraordinary manner evidence my loathing of this thy luke-warm hypocritical temper. And this expreſſion, *to ſpew out, &c.* ſeemeth to import theſe three, 1. That it ſhall be ſuch a judgement as will be an evidence of the Lords loathing of them, and giving up with them without reſpect to their form. 2. It implyeth a making of them loathſome before others, as vomit uſeth to be: and ſo it is the Lords taking by the vail of their hypocrify, and making them to fall from that reſpect and eſtimation amongſt others, which poſſibly they hunted after in this their external profeſſion. 3. It may imply the Lords giving them up to break out into groſs external ills, whereby they might be emptied of that vain ground of boaſting which they had in their former formality. And this being a common plague that follows proud hypocrify, and a thing that diſcovereth the rottenneſs and loathſomneſs of ſuch, it may well be underſtood here, ſeeing the ſcope is to threaten them with making them appear to be loathſome, although they did endeavour by all means to cover the ſame.



The reason of this severity, is added, *vers. 17.* and it is in sum this, I will take such course as may discover thy loathsomnesse, because thou art not only miserable and poor, but art conceity and proud, as if all were well, and knoweth not thy own rottennesse and unsoundnesse, therefore (saith he) I will thus discover it.

In this *vers.* we may consider, 1. What was indeed the case of this Church. 2. What they themselves did esteeme, and give it out to be. 3. With what confidence and upon what ground they did this. And lastly, the connexion betwixt this and the former threatening.

Their true state, is set forth in five words, in the close of the verse: The first is, *Thou art wretched*: which is a comprehensive word, and doth ordinarily set forth the bodily defects and personal unsoundnesse and loathsomnesse of one in respect of grievous diseases, and such like: this here is to be applied to their spiritual condition, which in these respects is no lesse wretched, disjointed, loathsome, &c. than the bodily condition of any can be. The second word, is, *miserable*: which looketh to a concurrence of external things beside the former wretchednesse, as want of means of supply, want of fitnessse to do for themselves, and want of any solide way of provision made for them by others, and such like: Thus (*Ezek. 16.*) the wretched child, is described, not only as loathsome, with the navil not cut, without washing with water to be supplied, &c. but none eye did pity it, to do any of these unto it, &c. so here, thou art miserable, that is, not only wretched in thy self; but in a disconsolate condition in respect of what thou may expect from others in this case. The third word, is, *poor*, that is, thou thinks thou hast many good works and much grace; but it is quite contrary; really thou hast nothing. The fourth is, *thou art blind*: that is an aggravation to all, that though thou be in this miserable condition, thou art senselesse and ignorant thereof, and neither knoweth thy danger, nor how to rid thy self out of the same. The fifth word, is, *and naked*, that is, without any thing to hide or cover this miserableness and filthinesse before the justice of God. It is not desperate when folks are poor and miserable in themselves, if they have on Christs righteousness to cover the same: but, saith the Lord to this Church, thou art in thy self miserable, and also without this cover, so that thou art lying as casten forth in the open fields, and obnoxious to the justice of God: This holdeth forth a very sad and a very dangerous condition. Yet, in the second place, we will find their thoughts of it to be far otherwayes: which the Lord setteth down in three words, 1. *Thou sayest I am rich*, that is, abounding in grace and good works, and having a righteousness sufficient enough. 2. *I am increased with goods*: which is still to be understood of their, esteeme of their own spiritual furnitur, which they think sufficient, not only to make them rich, but also to make them abound: and this, to be increased with goods, doth imply, both their esteeming of themselves to have much, and also to be upon the growing hand: which is a most dangerous condition, when a hypocrite doth not only falsely esteeme himself to have grace when he hath none, but doth flatter himself as if he were thriving and growing in the same. The third word, is *and have need of nothing*: this is indeed a comprehensive commendation of a condition. if there were ground for it: but where this entereth in a person abounding in corruption, it is the very height of self delusion and presumptuous hypocrisy, to wit, that a person should think himself free of hazard, well stored with graces, and a great length therein, &c. but especially (as in this place) that he should think himself fully clear, and sure of his peace with God, and interest in the Covenant; so that in these respects there is need of nothing. This we conceive is here intended, and doth indeed look very like the language of stout self-confident ignorant hypocrites.

It may be wondered how and with what confidence they

could entertain such thoughts. This is the third thing proposed, to be cleared in the words, and may be gathered from two expressions, 1. *Thou sayest I am rich, &c.* which words do not so much expresse the language of their mouths, as the inward language and confidence of the heart, and do import, not only their thinking of such a thing to be true, but their perswasion thereof, and confidence therein, even to a kind of audacity and impudency, so as nothing can put them from it, and is like these words, *Jer. 2. 23.* How canst thou say I am not polluted, &c. and *vers. 35.* yet thou sayest, because I am innocent, &c. which places hold forth the impudency of formal hypocrites that will stick to their own justification, even contrary to the clearest applications of the Word of God against them; and therefore, *Luk. 13. 26, &c.* some are brought in pleading, as it were, with Christ in the day of Judgement their own justification, and, though their will be no such pleading in that day, yet it sheweth that many hypocrites may live and die, without being brangled in this their vain confidence, until Christs final sentence do it, which is the scope of that place. The second word, is, *and knoweth not that thou art wretched, &c.* Some might think how could such poor persons boast so of their riches? this word sheweth that they were not grosse dissemblers speaking what they thought not; but that really they knew no better; and so they are (to say so) native, subtle hypocrites, as subtle hypocrisy is distinct from grosse dissembling. Which doth shew, 1. That hypocrites may really be blind and ignorant of their own unsoundnesse, and indeed think it otherwise than it is. 2. That this their ignorance doth not excuse them and extenuate their guilt; but on the contrary, it is both a sin in it self, and an aggravation of other sins to them; and for that end, it is made use of here.

The last thing in the *vers.* is, the connexion of this with the former threatening in the word, *because*; and is to this purpose, the reason of my so loathing thee, is not because simply thou art poor, miserable, and naked, &c. but because thou being such, art conceity of thy counterfeit profession, and unhumble under, and ignorant of, thy spiritual ills: therefore, *I will spew the out of my mouth, &c.* otherwise poverty and grace can agree well; but blind, proud, reigning hypocrisy, and grace, can never be consisting together in one person.

From which words, these observations are clear, 1. That many may be in a very miserable spiritual condition under some seeming form and profession. 2. That yet such who are poor and rotten, and withal, have some profession, are oftentimes exceeding vain, proud and carnally confident in respect of the same. It is a wonder that a person, or Church, in such a condition, should yet esteeme it self so as this doth: but this presumption and vain confidence, is not the least part of the subtilty of the sin of hypocrisy, and of the decelt of natural hearts. 3. It appeareth here, that many may absolve themselves with great confidence, and as having many seeming good grounds for their doing so, who yet may not be absolved by the Lord. 4. There is no condition more dangerous to a person, and loathsome to Christ, than to be poor and proud, or corrupt and rotten, and yet withal to be conceity and confident. 5. This universal confidence and satisfaction with ones own condition, is oftentimes (if not ever) a companion or fruit of the most desperate hypocrisy: because sincerity being imperfect as to its degrees, and so ever walking within sight of many wants, is still labouring under the sense thereof; and so in a dissatisfaction with its own condition in one respect or other. 6. We may see also, that it is a main part of a Ministers duty to rip up the secret and hidden hypocrisy of hearts, and to beat down the proud presumption of secure hypocrites, as well as to reprove the grosse out-breakings of profane persons. 7. In application, Ministers would commend the Word to consciences, and therefore would seek to convince the Hearers of their heart-language.

language, who oftentimes think more proudly and grossly of themselves and of their own condition, and even of Religion itself, than they dare outwardly profess.

The third thing in the Body of the Epistle, is, the cure which the Lord proposeth for such a case, *vers. 18*. There is a wonderful depth of iniquity and hypocrisy in their case: but here there is a far more wonderful depth and mystery of free grace and infinite love in the proposed cure. It is proposed by way of offer under the expressions that belong to bargaining. And indeed here is an excellent market or fair, wherein we may consider these five.

First, There is the wares proposed, which indeed are the cure of the former case; and they are contained in three words, 1. *It is gold tried in the fire.* 2. *White raiment.* 3. *Eye-salve.* All which are very suitable to their wretched, poor and blind condition: under which expressions is understood, Christ Jesus Himself, and His benefits, who only can work the effects ascribed to these upon sinners, and make such a change upon their Spiritual condition: for He it is, *that is made to us of God, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption, 1 Cor. 1. 30.* And considering the strain of the Gospel where these properties are only attributed to Christ, together with the scope of this place, there can be no doubt of this.

Secondly, We may consider here the parties that are bargainers: upon the one side, the offerer is the Prince of the Kings of the earth, the beginning of the Creation of God, our blessed Lord Jesus, who maketh offer of Himself to sinners, and saith, Behold Me, Behold Me, unto these who were not called by His Name; on the other side, these to whom the offer is made, or who are to be the buyers, they are wretched, poor, miserable, &c. This looketh disproportionable-like at first; yet it suiteth well with the bargain of Grace, where the Lord Merchant is, every man *that hath no money Isa. 55. 1.* providing he be thoroughly sensible of the same.

Thirdly, We have the commendation of these wares, especially in reference to the parties that they are proposed to; As, 1. the excellencie of the things themselves, the gold is *tried*, the raiment is *white*, &c. There is nothing in our Lord Jesus but is exceeding excellent. 2. The wares are exceeding useful and profitable, it is gold that *maketh rich*. The person that hath Christ, wanteth not Righteousness to pay his debt; and there is no other thing to make a person *rich*. 3. This raiment covereth *nakedness*: sin is not taken notice of where Christ is put on by Faith: For, His blood cleanseth from all sin, whereas there are many naked, loathsome souls under gorgeous robes. 4. The wares are most suitable to the party to whom they are proposed; they are poor, Christ maketh rich; they are naked, He covers: they are blind, He enlighteneth them, and openeth their eyes; there are no such suitable wares for a sinner as Christ, and whatever account self-righteous men have of Him, yet they who think themselves sinners, should by all means endeavour to purchase Him. 5. Wares are commended in this, they are necessary especially to such a party: there is no other way to be rich, but by having Christ; no other way to be covered, or clothed before God, but by His righteousness; or, to see, or be in capacity to walk rightly in Spiritual things, except He prove the leader.

The fourth thing in this market or bargain, will yet commend this more; and it is this, to wit, the terms upon which these wares are proposed, implied in these words, *buy of Me*: which is not to be understood, as if there were some equivalent price required, or to be given for Christ: for, that is contrary to the scope of this place. And, considering the excellency of these wares, and the poverty of these that are called to be the Merchants, what can be expected of them in recompence for such an excellent bargain? The terms then must be *Grace*, as the same market is proclaimed, *Isai. 55. 1, 2, 3. Ho, every one*

*that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price, &c.* And *vers. 3.* the wares to be bought are the same, to wit, *the sure mercies of David*, that is, Christ Jesus, (as being compared with *Act. 13. 34.* is clear) whom the Lord promiseth there to give, because there is no other way possible for the attaining of Him. This is expressed under the similitude of buying, to shew, that as there is in covenanting with God two parties to be considered (as in all bargaining) and some excellent wares which the one must have from the other; so there must be a mutual consent and engaging for the closing of this bargain, as there useth to be in bargains amongst men, though the difference be still in this, that here all the terms are of Grace. But, God willing, we shall consider the nature of this bargain peculiarly by it self.

The fifth thing in this bargain is the manner of Christs proposing the same, *I counsel thee, &c.* which is not so proposed, as if it were left indifferent to them to hearken or not. But it is thus expressed, for these reasons, 1. That thereby he may bear out his affection, who, as a friend, condescendeth to give them counsel in things that are of most concernment for their own good. 2. This also sheweth the necessity and advantage of following this advice, because they are counselled to it by Him that is the Counsellor, *Isa. 9. 6.* and the Fathers substantial Wisdom. It must therefore be folly to reject His advice. 3. It is thus expressed, to gain their consent the more willingly to the same: therefore in the Gospel He doth beseech and intreat, &c. that thereby hearts may be induced to submit cheerfully to Him.

This *verse* contains a sum of the Gospel, and is a treasure of many Gospel-truths, as, 1. That there is no condition so desperate, but there is a fulness and efficacy in our Lord Jesus to cure the same: He is *gold, white raiment, eye-salve, &c.* and (the meaning of these expressions being obvious) we conceive there is no need to insist upon them. 2. This Doctrine is clear, That upon condition of believing and fleeing to Christ, the most loathsome, luke-warm, desperate hypocrite may have mercy: otherways such a counsel had not been given to *Ladicea*. 3. As there is a fulness in Christ; so there is a freeness in Grace to make that fulness forthcoming to sinners that will follow Christs advice: and there is no sinner that heareth this Gospel, but may think himself sufficiently warranted to close this bargain with Christ, if heartily he submit to the terms thereof. But of these no more for the time.

The fourth thing in the Body of the Epistle, is, our Lords pressing of this His counsel: which is done two wayes, *vers. 19, 20. as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten*, (saith he) *be zealous therefore and repent*. The first part of the *verse* hath the Argument in it, The second part, is, a conclusion drawn from it. The Argument is, *whom I love, I rebuke and chasten*, that is, it is not my way to reprove with words or chasten with rods these whom I carry no respect unto; but I use this way to them whom I love, as I love my visible Church, which is confirmed from *Prov. 3. 12.* and therefore seeing I take this way with you, and do not give up with you, my counsel ought to be the better received: where it would be observed, that it is still the same persons whom at first He chargeth. The conclusion drawn from this, hath two parts: The first is, *be zealous*, that is, mind to exercise Religion more seriously, in opposition to their former formality and luke-warmness; and that in the performing of the duties thereof, zeal to the glory of God, may be lively and predominant. This we conceive doth not press new duties; but a more spiritual end, motive, manner and edge in the doing of them: for, many duties may be done without zeal to God, though where this is not, they are never acceptable. The second part of the direction, is, *and repent*: which calleth them kindly to be affected with their



their hypocritical condition: And these two are inferred by the word, *Therefore*, from the former ground that expresseth Gods love to them.

The second way he presseth it, *vers. 20.* is, by a most instant and importunate pursuing of His offer, with a protestation of His being there, and of His making the same. This is done four wayes: First, by shewing His work and posture, *I stand at the door and knock.* Hearts naturally are as Castles shut and guarded by the devil against Christ: when He cometh with His Ordinances, He doth thereby, as it were, lay a siege at them, & by His Word knock at the doors thereof to gain their consent; and the more pungently He presseth by His Ordinances, He is said to knock the more: and in this respect, *Song. 5. 2.* His voice is said to knock at the Believers door in their sleepy condition. Here these two things are imported, 1. Christs continuing to deal with His Church, and to wait upon her in His Ordinances, notwithstanding of her many former refusals. Thus, He is said to *stand at the door*: whereby is holden forth their ingratitude to Him, in keeping of Him out, and His patience that still waiteth on. 2. In this, by the other word, is imported His growing more instant in His dealing with them: therefore He is said to *knock*. And indeed if the former sharp threatening and charge, and the sweet and free offer be considered, it may well be said that now His knocks are doubled.

The second way He presseth in this *verse*, is, by making His offer particular, as it were, bringing it to every mans door, *if any man hear my voice, and open the door, &c.* Wherein, 1. He expresseth what He would have. 2. From whom. What He would have, is in two expressions, the one is, *if any man hear my voice*, that is, its harkning to His voice which He requireth, as *Pf 95. 7.* for the want of which He complaineth, *Pf 81. 13.* And in these expressions often the terms of the Covenant of Grace are expressed, as *Isai. 55. 2, 3.* and is, upon the matter, that same with *buying* formerly mentioned, as in that place of *Isaiah* is clear. And it setteth forth Faiths consenting to hear and hearken to, and accept of Gods offer of Grace in the Covenant; as, refusing to hear, holdeth forth mens rejecting of the same. The other word, is, *and open the door*: it is the same thing for substance with the former. Thus also Faiths closing with the Covenant of Grace, is often expressed, as *Psal. 81. 10.* *Acts 16. 14.* because by Faith, the heart that was formerly shut against Christ, is made open to Him, and He hath way made for Him to enter into the same, as is clear from *Song. 5. 2.* *Pf. 24. 7, 9.* and *Acts 16. 14.* where the Lords opening the heart of *Lydia*, is expressly expounded to be *her giving heed to these things, which Paul spoke*, that is, her receiving of the same by Faith. This then is the duty called for, and the terms upon which the offer is made, to wit, Faiths yielding to receive and admit Christ, for the end for which He is proposed. Secondly, The person called to this, is expressed thus, *if any man, &c.* which putteth it so to every hearer, as if it went round to every particular person, *if thou, and thou, or thou, &c.* and this manner of expression doth obviate any objection which might rise, such as, what if the most part reject? be it so, saith He, *if any man open*, it shall be well with him: or, if it should be objected, I am a sinner, miserable, a hypocrite of long standing that hath often rejected the Gospel, &c. This, *if any man will open, &c.* answereth all these at once: because where the Lord saith *any man*, without exception, who is he that can limit the same, where a person of whatsoever condition or qualification is found, that will accept of the offer according to the terms proposed? and so this *any*, is a particular application of the former advice; yet, such a particular application, as reacheth every one of whatsoever condition they be.

The third way how it is pressed here, is, by subjoyning a most comfortable promise unto *any man* so understood, as it is

said, to wit, *if any man will open, I will come in to him*; that sheweth an union which shall be betwixt Christ and him: *I will sup with him*; this sheweth a friendly familiar way of communion that Christ shall entertain with him, as it is, *Song. 5. 1. I am come into my Garden, I have eaten my honey with my honey comb, I have gathered my myrrhe, &c.* Christ is a most heartsome guest where He is entertained. It is added, *and he shall sup with me*: this is the fruit and effect of the former two; and expresseth the sweet satisfaction that the sinner who openeth to Christ shall have by union and communion with Him, as in that same place of the *Song. 5. vers. 1.* when He cometh to feed Himself upon His own *spices*, His own *myrrhe*, and His own *wine*, and what He brings with Him, then hath He a large allowance to His friends, as in the next words, *eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.* O so satisfying a life as it is to have Christ dwelling in the heart, and thus to be feasted with the comforts of His presence which are better than life! and what more can there be requisite to press the making of Christ welcome by sinners, than such a promise, or rather, three promises put in one?

The fourth thing that presseth this offer in this *verse*, is, the *behold*, which is deservedly premitted to all. And in this place (beside the usual weight it hath in other cases) it is Christ, making this offer of His observable to them, so that afterward they shall not get it shifted, but this shall be as an Instrument taken upon His making the offer, to stand in *futuram rei memoriam*: and so is like that, *be it known unto you, men, and brethren, &c.* whereby Paul closeth His Sermon, *Acts 13. 38.* and thus, as it were, he driveth the nail to the head before he leave it, testifying that if this good bargain come not to a close, the blame shall be upon their side. And so we may see how weightily the Lord Preacheth in these Epistles to the Churches.

The conclusion of the Epistle followeth, in the last two *verses*, having two parts, as all the rest have. The first is a promise made to the evercomer, with an excellent qualification of the same, *vers. 21.* The promise, is, *To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit upon my Throne*: it is in substance the same with many promises formerly mentioned, to wit, a promise to make him partaker of Christs Glory: it is not only to bring him to Glory, but to make him a sharer of that Glory which Christ the Head possesseth; that so he may reign with him and partake of the fruits of His Dominion and Conquest. The qualification or amplification of this promise, is, *even as I overcame, and am sit down upon my Fathers Throne*: which doth import these three, 1. The greatness of this glory, which they are to partake of: Christ is set upon the Fathers Throne, and they are to be admitted to Christs Throne, and so consequently to partake both of the Glory of the Father, and of the Son according to their capacity. 2. It is set forth in the sureness thereof: it is sure to the overcomer, even as that exaltation is sure to Christ. 3. It setteth forth the method of it: so that as Christ did first suffer and overcome, and did then come to Glory; so these that are to be set down upon His Throne must come in the same method, by wrestling, and overcoming to obtain the same.

The other thing of the conclusion, is the common advertisement, now the seventh time repeated, *v. 22.* Yet is it never idly done: Which sheweth, 1. What all mens duty is, to wit, it is their part that live in any place at any time, to receive the Word of God with as great reverence, as others who lived in some other place, and at some other time: therefore this advertisement is given equally to all the Churches, and to all Hearers. It is mens duty to receive with reverence every Word of God, of whatsoever kind it be: therefore it is subjoynd to all the several messages. 2. It sheweth mens sinful stubbornness that are not easily brought to give obedience to this principal duty.

It is meet now that we take notice of some difficulties that may arise from the words. And here it may be enquired, what is to be thought of this Church? or, what judgement may be given of the same? *Ans.* Although it is hard to determine peremptorily concerning the state; yet it appeareth that the condition of this Church, is the very worst of any that hath been written to: For, 1. there is nothing in her commendable, (at least commended) as was in *Ephesus*, *Pergamos*, and other Churches. 2. There is no person excepted from the charge of luke-warmness and hypocrisy, as was done in the Epistle to *Sardis*, v. 4. But the strain of the Epistle runneth to charge them, and to charge them all with a most grievous charge. And seeing our Lord doth take this title to Himself in this very Epistle, to be *the faithful and true witness*, it is not like that He would have altogether past over their honesty, or such as were sincere amongst them, without commending the same, if there had been any such to be commended. For, our Lord kept that way in all the former Epistles; and had there been any sincere persons in this Church, it had been no less to their commendation, and to the commendation of His Grace, to have commended the same: yet we think that the Lord is in trying-terms with them, and therefore might possibly have some to call off actually from amongst them, which maketh Him thus, out of love to continue and *knock*: yet we cannot see any ground to conclude that there was any sincerity, or sincere person amongst them for the time. Upon which, several Questions may arise, as,

1. It may be asked, If there can be any particular Church, without some sincere persons in the same, seeing it is compared to a floor where both Wheat and Chaff are? *Ans.* If we consider the visible Church as Catholick and Universal; so, indeed she can neither be without hypocrites, nor without true Converts, as may be gathered from these similitudes whereby she is holden forth in Scripture: but if we consider the particular Societies or Congregations that meet together at Ordinances for Worship, we suppose that it cannot be so peremptorily determined in reference to each of these, as if there had never been a particular Church without hypocrites on the one hand, or sincere persons on the other: for, there is no such promise that can be extended to every particular Congregation; but these promises must be applied to the Catholick Church: in which only, faith cannot fail. Again these properties and descriptions of the visible Church, do not agree to every particular Congregation, but to the Church-universal, which is called the Kingdom of Heaven, and likened to such and such similitudes. Beside, if we consider experience, it will be hard to say that never any company of hypocrites did combine together of themselves, or by providence were casten to meet at the same Ordinances in the way of a particular Congregation. There can be little said of this Church of *Laodicea* to vindicate her from this. On the other side, it were hard to say that never any, though the most chaste number, should meet together in a Church-way, and be without hypocrites: This indeed I grant is much more difficult, and cannot but be much more rare than the other; (which I suppose is but too frequent) yet considering what may be said for these hundred and twenty who did meet and continue together, *Act. 1. 15*. we suppose it is hard simply to deny the same. From which, it will follow that the visible Church must be principally considered in the New Testament as Catholick, seeing these main properties and descriptions can only be applicable to it as such, and are not so to be applied to particular Congregations.

2. It may be enquired, that seeing this Church is holden forth as hypocritical, what may be the characters of a hypocrite, as they are here drawn by the Lord? *Ans.* There are two sorts of hypocrites: one is more gross, and do indeed know that they are but dissembling: these are not properly hypo-

crites, but dissemblers. A second sort, is, more subtle, that is, when not only they make others to esteem of them, as if they were sincere; but when they come indeed to have such an estimation of themselves. These are properly hypocrites, and such as are described here, *vers. 17*. Now, from this Epistle, such a description may be gathered. 1. A subtle hypocrite, is one that hath some large profession, and fruitfulness as to many external duties: in this respect, *he is not cold*, as wanting all form; but it may be he aboundeth in that. 2. Though he hath much form; yet hath he no power nor reality at all: otherways he could not be denominate a hypocrite, though he might be said to have much hypocrisy in him: and in this respect, the hypocrite is not *hot*, even as he is not *cold*. 3. He is one that notwithstanding of this his want of sincerity, is yet still insensible of his *poverty*, *wretchedness* and *misery*, &c. Thus *vers. 17*. he knoweth not that he is *poor*, *miserable*, *blind*, &c. and this is a main piece of the subtilty of hypocrisy, whereby not only others, but even the person himself is deceived, in respect of his own state and condition. 4. As he is insensible of his poverty, so is he highly puffed up with the estimation of what appeareth to himself to have: and thus his security, is perfect peace; his presumption, is strong faith and confidence; his praying, and common liberty in the same, are most lively parts of communion with God in His account; and thus *he saith*, *he is rich*, v. 17. and really thinketh so. 5. He is a man that doth continue and grow in this self-opinion: for, being unacquainted with through convictions, and with any apprehension of declining, or falling from the good which he had, he doth apprehend himself to be upon the growing hand, and so to him still, his faith, grace, and state of friendship with God, &c. do become the more unquestionable to him, and he supposeth himself to be, in all these respects, upon the thriving hand: therefore it is said, that *he thinketh himself to be increased with goods*, &c. 6. He is one that is exceedingly well content and satisfied with his own condition; and so, in his own estimation, there is none more honest and sincere, none that loveth God more singly, or is more beloved of Him; and, in a word, none with whom he would exchange his condition. This is a man that hath *need of nothing* in his own account; but is as if all were well already. 7. Under all this he is a man that hath never been at the market of free Grace, nor hath bought, or put on the white raiment, &c. therefore still all the wares are his own; his righteousness is of his own spinning; his peace standeth on his own bottom; and Christ hath never been fled unto, or accepted of for righteousness by him: therefore is there still need of making offer of, and pressing, the market of Grace unto and upon him. 8. Notwithstanding of this, he is as confident as if all were well: and he is in an incapacity (except the Lord do it in an extraordinary way) to be convinced either that he wanteth sincerity in the strain of his walk, or that he hath not received Christ or made use of His righteousness: and though he may take with many particular challenges; yet he is guarded, as it were, against these two. Therefore it is said, there must *be eye-salve* bestowed upon him, to discover his nakedness to him. And this is even the height of all, when self-conceitedness and vain confidence so possess the heart, as to make all convictions to be rejected, and to keep the soul sleeping securely without suspecting its own naughtiness.

3. If it be asked, how a person that is so unsound cometh to have such thoughts of himself, or such confidence of his own condition? We may Answer, Upon these considerations, 1. Men naturally are lovers of themselves, and admirers of what is in themselves. Hence it is, that men are so easily induced to overvalue their own natural and moral parts, and, upon the same account, these things that look more Spiritual-like. 2. Men naturally cannot discern the things of God, for they are Spiritually discerned: it is no wonder there-



fore that they take that which glittereth to be gold, especially this being added to the former consideration. 3. He hath all the concurrence the devil can give him to cause him entertain such thoughts: and therefore often such a man is kept from gross tentations, and foul out-breakings, which many sincere persons are tortured with: by which the devil aimeth to keep all in quiet, as the scope of the parable runneth, *Matth. 12. 29.* If we consider his practice, it needeth not seem strange that he be thus deluded: for, he doth not search himself; he doth not make hypocrisy his burden, or use these means whereby the sincere-hearted are helped to a discovery of their own naughtiness: and therefore, what wonder is it that such be strangers to this? 5. When they go on smothering convictions, neglecting duties, and such like, there is something that cometh judicially from God to give them up to that delusion, so as to trust the language of their own hearts concerning their own state, beyond the most clear convincing reproofs that may come from the Word of the Lord: and this is to be found, (*Isai. 44. 20.*) in a very irrational like thing, as the worshipping of stocks and stones; yet such a person, being turned aside by a deceived heart, cannot deliver his own soul, nor say, is there not a lie in my right hand? 6. There are some concurring things which may also have influence upon this, as suppose men be so esteemed of by others who are esteemed gracious, especially if upon some fits of convictions, or common exercises, they have been inconsiderately cryed up by Ministers, as exercised Christians, when as yet the exercise hath not taken root, nor hath it been adverted possibly, how it came to a close: by such and such like means, often may a Novice, or one who is not a Christian thoroughly, come to be puffed up and fall in the condemnation of the devil, by this or some other way. And, no question, these foolish Virgins were not a little confirmed in their vain confidence and presumption, from this, that they had the company and countenance of the wise Virgins, which, it may be, many others had not, *Matth. 25.*

4. If it be asked, If a hypocrite can discern his own rottenness and hypocrisy, or fear and suspect the same? *Ans.* 1. A hypocrite may come a great length as to this, at some particular times and occasions, especially when some sudden fears seem to surprise, or when some particular challenge and the fear of wrath is born in upon him; yet in so far as he hath these, and entertaineth them, he cannot be called a hypocrite; but in so far as he beareth down and passeth over the same. For, there is a real ground of suspicion and fear within him, &c. and therefore to be affected therewith, is not properly hypocrisy, except the same be hypocritically used, that is, that it be kept from making discernable to him the rottenness of his state, but on the contrary, he becometh the more vain because of such flashes, and seeming exercises, when yet they have never been suffered to come the length of any real sincerity. 2. We suppose, that the continuance of such suspicions, challenges and fears, is inconsistent with the state of hypocrisy, of which we are speaking, because security and presumption (to say so) are essentials to such a hypocrite: and we conceive that the continuance of such challenges, fears, &c. in any degree, cannot be consistent with such an absolute security and confidence, as was formerly spoken to. Yet no such fear or exercise, &c. will be a proof of sincerity, except they be rightly improved for the discovering of a persons self-inability, and for the putting of them to the market of free Grace, by which only such fears can be rightly removed. 3. Where these fits of fears and suspicion are in hypocrites, they proceed rather from some apprehension or sense of wrath (as in these who dispute concerning their Salvation) then from any seen or felt grossness of the corruption that is in themselves; or from any dissatisfaction with their own faith, or sincerity upon the distinct discovery of their own rottenness and hypocrisy in it self: and there-

fore such fears follow not upon their searching of themselves, nor result from the discovery of their own naughtiness, nor are willingly entertained by them: but on the contrary, it is some apprehension of wrath that wakeneth them; and what apprehensions they have of their unsoundness, are but impressed upon this occasion: whereas the Believer, first, seeth and feeleth the body of death within him, and then hath the apprehensions of wrath flowing from that. 4. In their doubtings and suspicions, they are most sensibly touched with respect to the end and event, that is, they doubt whether they may attain heaven, or miss it: and possibly because of their unbelief, they may draw such sentences sometime against themselves; yet are they not usually brought to sentence themselves in respect of their own state, and to judge themselves as lost and graceless: for, eye-salve, to discover our nakedness, is a gift of Christs giving, and goeth alongst in one bargain with gold, white raiment, &c. Therefore it cannot be thought that any hypocrite can have this kindly discovery of their own nakedness, and natural loathsomeness in respect of the root thereof, though they may have many particular fruits discovered to them. 5. If a hypocrite come under any fit of terror or conviction thus to sentence himself: yet, even then, it is not simple dissatisfaction with his own sinfulness, which maketh him do the same; but some apprehended terror of God upon him: and therefore when that is removed, his sentence past upon himself is retreated. And so in such a case, a hypocrites sentencing of himself, is but his expressing what he apprehendeth to be Gods sentence upon him, or, it is his fore-telling of what he thinks coming: and this supponeth still Gods sentence to be past in his apprehension, which maketh them not so much pass their own sentence upon the account of their own deservings, as to express with regrate what he hath passed already: which by no means they would do, if they could eschew it: whereas a sincere person doth arraign and judge himself, from the sense of his own guilt, accounting it just that God should do so also, although they do not look upon his deed as the ground of theirs, (as in the former case) but on their own guiltiness without respect thereto.

5. It may be asked, how a Minister may discern a luke-warm temper among the people over whom he hath charge? *Ans.* Although peremptory decision of such a persons state, who hath a form of Religion, be a thing that Ministers, nor others, are not to take on them; Yet (considering that such a case is often most frequent, and that it is of most weighty concernment for a Minister to discern the same; also, that where it is common, it is ordinarily one way or other so far discernable as is fit, to a searching discerning eye.) We may offer from these words such characters thereof, as may help a Minister in applying of himself suitably, at least, to their present frame. 1. Such a luke-warm temper hath much more light than life, and much more delight in speculative knowledge, and in such preachings as bring some new thing to that, than they have in what really feedeth the soul, and tendeth to search the conscience or awaken any spiritual exercise therein. 2. Such a people have ordinarily a heal and unbroken condition; without fears, exercises, or doubts; and so accordingly there will be little of such subjects the matter of discourse betwixt them and the Minister: yea, if such a thing be moved, either they will suffer it to die out, as a thing which they are not acquainted with, or delighted in; or, to entertain it with some such general expressions as rather shew their desire not to be thought ignorant, than any way to express their sense of the same. 3. Much of their discourse of Religion will readily be to their own commendation, even when they seem with the Pharisee, (*Luke 18.*) to thank God they are not as other men: and so still there is some expression of their satisfaction with their own condition that's discernable in the whole strain of their

their discourse and way, what ever acknowledgements may be intermixed. 4. It is discernable by pride, self-esteem, vain confidence, &c. that do accompany such, which for a continuance of time together can hardly be hid to a searching Minister: for, this doth not only kitch negatively in their want of spiritual exercises and such like; but it will even often kitch positively, by their censuring of others when they fall; by their asserting their own sincerity, and the clearness and confidence that they have of their own good condition; and by their looking upon all things which may touch at their sore, as not belonging to them, and as if they were above and without the reach of all such grounds of doubting. 5. Such love rather to have the esteem and familiar acquaintance of their Minister, than to have profit by his Ministry: hence they will be short in no civil courtesies; will be desirous of having the Minister frequently with them, and that he may love them, and readily complain if he humour them not in that; yet he may be many nights in their company and find it hard to edifie much; or discover any great greediness in them to take the Word off his hand. We see the Pharisees invited Christ to their houses, thinking it a part of their esteem, and name, to be familiar with such a person; yet it is not recorded of any of them that they intended their own edification, or made use of such opportunities for that end, as *Marie*, did, *Luk. 10. 42.* 6. Men in such a frame, as they are professed enemies to profanerie; so are they secret whisperers against true tenderness, and tender persons; they wonder what spiritual exercises are; and why folks will not believe, and so quiet all their doubts; they are ready to count diligence and seriousness beyond their own pitch, to be but fanfic and conceits, as we see in some Pharisees, condemning poor women that were mourning at Christs feet; and upon occasions they cannot well hide the same, especially, when any faults break out in such, as once seemed to be more tender, then they blesse themselves in their own form of Religion, and insult upon these; whereas these that are truly spiritual, are commanded to restore (and will readily endeavour it) such as fall with the spirit of meekness, *Gal. 6. 1.* 7. Somewhat is discernable by a peoples conversing with others: for, such readily love to converse with these that do admire them, and make no doubt of their piety and sincerity: and so Ministers and People both, that speak most smoothly to them, without riping up any thing of their wounds are most beloved by them, and spoken of with the greatest commendations, even in their absence. 8. Some thing also may be gathered from this, if the Congregation be esteemed to be generally religious, and if their manner of carriage under it be still the same, and hath been so far a long time together, without any observable change, and such like. When these things concur, it may justly be suspected if such a work be real that's so universal and easily constant. By these and such like, an observing and discerning Minister may, at least, come so farr in the knowledge of such a case, as may warrand him to apply himself to deal with them suitably to the same.

6. If it should be asked, How it is that a Minister ought to deal with people in such a frame? This will be indeed more difficult to answer, and will be the matter of many serious thoughts to a faithful Minister, lest he run, and labour in vain among such a people. For there is no people with greater difficulty gained by the Gospel; and there is not ordinarily any case that doth destroy so many souls in the visible Church, as this doth: and therefore there is not more zeal and prudence required in reference to any sort of persons, than in reference to such. For helping to answer this, we may offer these things from the way which our Lord useth in this Epistle, 1. A Minister that hath to do with such a people, would endeavour to have a ministerial esteem amongst them, that is, that, upon the one side, he may have a testimony in their consciences, that he loveth them, and wisheth the good of their souls, as a faithful Minister should do: otherways, if there should be any other

jar, all his reproofs and threatnings will be accounted to flow from that, and so be rejected. Again, on the other side, when (I say) this respect ought to be ministerial, it is to seclude a carnal, trivial respect and affection, that doth proceed from too great familiarity with such persons, than which there is nothing more dangerous both to Ministers and People: for, where it is, he is accounted a companion, and, plainness from him, hath no weight with it: for they cannot think that he would converse with them so familiarly, if he had indeed such thoughts of their condition, as faithfulness will put a Minister to expresse in such a case: and, as such persons usually seek to gain such affection and familiarity from their Minister, as a special mean to keep him in esteeming so of them, as they do of themselves; So Ministers would beware of giving them such a stumbling; but to endeavour such an esteem amongst them, as is, for the works sake, *1 Thes. 5. 12:* 2. A Minister in such a case would not hold upon general Doctrines, nor the reproofing of grosse scandals only; but he would set himself in application to insist upon hypocrisie and luke warmness, and so to describe it, to shew the riseness of it, to set forth the loathsomeness and the hazard that cometh to souls by it, and that in a searching, grave and weighty manner, that he may be seen to be affected therewith himself, as the Lord doth in this place. 3. This would be done pungently and purposely, as if a Minister were building forts to besiege a City, or taking a strong hold by the Gospel: and therefore one battery would be made to follow upon the back of another, if so be such stout pillars of presumption may be battered down: and for that end, the Word would be sharpened and edged, that it may prove a discerners of the thoughts and intents of the heart, and lay open, not only what is the mans practice without, but what is the heart-language within; what are his thoughts of himself; what are the grounds upon which he buildeth them; what are the answers whereby he shifteth challenges; what are the deceits wherewith he beguileth himself in all these, and such like: which is the Lords practice here, *thou sayest, &c.* 4. A Minister would threaten such indefinitely, as here, and, when he hath described them with their characters and symptoms, thunder out the Lords wrath and curse even against hypocrisie, luke-warmness, self-conceitedness, want of humility, such as have not fled to Christ, are not born again, and such like; that they may know such spiritual ills are loathsome to God. 5. It is fit in such a case to rid marches between Nature and Grace accurately and distinctly; and to give such symptoms of the one, and marks of the other, as may clearly from Scripture set bounds between hypocrisie and sinceritie; between duties done in the right manner, and such as are but in shew; so as consciences may be bound with it, that these things are the Truths of God. 6. There would be still a plain opening-up of the way of Justification through Faith in Christ, which is the sure ground of all peace: and there would be a clearing of the terms of the Covenant of Grace, and of the Doctrine of Regeneration; and withal, a most serious pressing of them to make the right choise, and to accept of the best bargain. Lastly, This application would be carried-on with more than ordinary vehemencie in the manner, weightiness in the expression, convincingness in the Arguments and Motives, &c. beside secret wrestling with God for them: therefore the Lord here obtesteth, and protesteth in the pressing of this: this also would not be done for some little space of time; but would be continued, and insisted in: therefore the Lord knocketh, and He standeth and knocketh: which giveth a patern of what Ministers ought to do in such a case. And indeed there is no greater need of any thing, than by weighty powerful Preaching, and convincing Application, to beat and knock at hearts with the Word, as with a hammer: because, there is no condition more ripe, and more dangerous in the Church of God, than the same of which we have spoken.



## Concerning the identity of Angel, Bishop, and Presbyter.

IT may possibly seem strange to some, that in the Exposition of all these Epistles, we have still applied what is spoken to, or of, the Angels, as being spoken to, or of, ordinary Ministers: whereas to some, it appeareth, that these Angels were some singular and eminent persons, having Jurisdiction and Authority over other Ministers, such as usually is given to Bishops and Prelates as contradistinct from the other: and that therefore this Exposition and Application, which all along, doth confound Bishops and Ministers, as if there were no distinction amongst them, is not to be admitted.

To say something to this now, upon the close of all the Epistles: We do indeed acknowledge that this Exposition doth confound the same, and will admit of no distinction amongst them, as amongst Officers of the Church of a higher and lower place. And although we hinted somewhat at the reasons of this, *Chap. 1. vers. 20.* Yet we shall arrest any serious Reader (who will ponder and weight the series of these Epistles, and the application of them) if he can judge it possible to expound, and apply these Epistles in any useful and practical manner, and not be necessitate to understand what is spoken of, or to these Angels, as being spoken of, and to, the Ministers of these Churches. And, having now gone through the same, we profess ourselves to be more confirmed in the Exposition of this title *Angel*, which was formerly given. And if it were not so, we truly would not know how to expound these Epistles, or to apply the same to one, such as this Bishop, contradistinguished from Ministers or Presbyters, is supposed to be. And although we purpose not to digress in this; yet that it be not looked upon as any unreasonable thing thus to confound Bishops and Ministers, and to take them for one and the same Officer, we shall propose these four considerations,

The first is, That we are sure this is agreeable to Scripture: and if in Scripture they be thus confounded; it must certainly be safest to speak with it. Now that the Scripture doth so, may appear from these Scriptures, which even many of the Ancients have made use of for this end. The first is, *Act. 20.* where (*vers. 17.*) *Paul* doth call the *Elders of Ephesus*; and when he hath continued for a time to speak unto them (*vers. 28.*) he doth give them this stile of *Bishops* (for what is translated *Overseers*, is in the Original, *ἐπισκοποι*) In which place they are most evidently spoken of as one, both in respect of name and in respect of Office.

The second place is, *Philip. 1.* where *Paul* directeth his Epistle, beside the Saints, to the *Bishops and Deacons*, without mentioning of any Minister or Presbyter. The reason why they are called *Bishops*, in the plural number, is, not because there were plurality of Lord-Bishops, as distinct from Ministers in one City; but it is, because by *Bishops*, is understood the plurality of Ministers that were therein. And *Chrysostome* upon the words observeth, That in the Scripture, distinction is not made betwixt these titles; but the same that is a Minister, is also a Bishop.

The third place is, *Tit. 1.* by comparing, *vers. 5.* with *vers. 7.* where in the one, these words are, *for this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou should ordain Elders (or Ministers) in every City.* and in the 7. *vers.* after he hath given some directions concerning their qualification, he doth subjoyn this as a reason enforcing the observation of the same, *for a Bishop must be blameless, &c.* and if both were not one, there could be no force in his reasoning. The word also rendered *Bishop*, is that same which was in the former places.

The fourth place is, *1 Pet. 5. 1, 2.* where *Peter*, exhorting the Ministers, or preaching Elders, to watch carefully over the flock and to feed the same, expresseth the nature of their

Office to consist in this, in having, or taking, the oversight of the flock: which in the Original, is the same word, that must be applied to Bishops, and might be rendered thus, *feed the flock that is among you, overseeing the same as Bishops, not by constraint but willingly*: for the word is, *ἐπισκοποῦτε*. And there were no reason for him to require Ministers to play the Bishops (to speak so) by watching so over the Flocks as belong to them, if Bishops and Ministers in the language of the Holy Ghost were not one and the same. Neither will that exception which *Billarmin* hath (*de Clericis, lib. 1. cap. 15.*) and sundry other Papists wish him, to wit, that at that time these titles were not distinguished in the Church, but used in common, as they prove out of many of the Ancients; But, on the contrary, this doth confirm our assertion: For, 1. If they were not distinguished then, who can afterward distinguish them? 2. Can there be so universal and frequent mentioning of them as one, except they be really and wholly so? 3. It appeareth by these Scriptures, where not only the titles are confounded as belonging to the same Officers, but the offices themselves are confounded, both in respect of the qualifications of the persons, and in respect of ordaining and installing of them in these offices, and also in respect of the duties that are required of both. It is worth the observing which the Jesuit *Lorinus* hath to this purpose, *Act. 20. 17.* who, after the rejecting of many answers, is brought to acquiesce in this as truth, that these names were common in the Apostles dayes, who did use the title of *Bishop*, and *Presbyter* indifferently: and that therefore these who are Presbyters in the one verse, are stiled Bishops in the other: he doth also afterward subjoyn this similitude to illustrate the same; As (saith he) in the Primitive time the title *Papa*, or *Pope*, was indifferently given to all eminent Bishops; but afterwards was restricted to the Bishop of *Rome*, for distinguishing him from others; so (saith he) the title *Bishop*, which was at first common to all Ministers, was at last appropriated to some few; who, for distinguishing them from others, were thus stiled, for setting forth their Authority and Jurisdiction above them. This indeed seemeth to be the truth, and sheweth clearly that Bishops and Popes (in the sense that some do plead for) have the same original, and are grown up by the same means, to be distinguished from others as being above them, to wit, by mens pride and humane constitutions.

I know that even by some of the Fathers these two places, to wit, *Eph. 4. 11, 12.* and, *1 Tim. 3. 2.* with 8. are adduced for the same end: because, in the first place, the Apostle reckoneth out both extraordinary and ordinary Preaching officers, without making any mention of Bishops: which could not be, if they were not the same with Pastors that are named, as *Ambrose* on the place asserteth. And although it seemeth that in somethings he mis-representeth the Primitive order of the Church; yet is he forced to add, *idcirco non per omnia conveniunt scripta Apostoli ordinationi que nunc in Ecclesia est: quia hac inter ipsa primordia scripta sunt.* And though that last reason hath no weight in it to infer any change upon the Church now, in respect of its Office-bearers, from what it was then in the Apostles dayes, and ordained to be by them; yet this is clear, that he granteth a clear difference between the state of the Church in these dayes, wherein this distinction of Bishops from Pastors was come to some height, from what it was in the time of the Apostles, which certainly must be the most pure times of the Church. In the other place, to wit, *1 Tim. 3. 1, &c.* The Apostle proposeth certain rules for the trying and ordaining of one to be a Bishop, and after, in *vers. 8.* he doth immediately passe to the office of a Deacon, without mentioning of a Presbyter or Minister: which sheweth, that in speaking of Bishops, he did understand Presby-

ters and did acknowledge no distinct Teaching officer between them and Deacons. And indeed the rules and qualifications are the same which he maketh common to Bishops and Presbyters, Tit. 1. Chrysostom moveth the same Question on the words, ver. 8. *Homilia 14.* to wit, *why doth Paul pass immediately from Bishops to Deacons, omitting Presbyters? because (saith he) between a Bishop and a Presbyter there is almost no difference: for the care of the Church is committed to Presbyters: and what he spoke of Bishops, doth agree to Presbyters.* Only he subjoyneth, in the matter of Ordination, doth the Bishop differ from the Minister? And this difference is not to be understood to be such as was in the Apostles days: for the former Scripture will confute that. Therefore even this same Father with others, do assert that then Presbyters did ordain Bishops, as in the instance of *Timothee*, 1 Tim. 4. they assayed to make out; But it is a difference that was brought in afterward in the Church, and was in exercise for that time, though without any warrant from the Word. And if these Scriptural grounds hold, as by what is said, they necessarily and clearly must, it mattereth the less what may be said from other grounds. And so we leave this first consideration.

Our second consideration, is, That this confounding both of the titles and offices of Bishop and Presbyter, will be found agreeable to the most pure Primitive times. It is true, within some few ages, difference was made between Bishops and Presbyters in the Church; yet was never that distinction counted by them to be *jure divino*, or by the Law of God; but as a thing belonging to order in the Church, and brought in by custome: which was, that he who was of greatest age and respect, and did preside in the meetings, was particularly called Bishop, which afterward was established by some Counsels. If we might take the testimony of some Papists here, they will confirm this; *Michael Medina* (as he is cited by *Bellarmin*, lib. 1. de Clericis, cap. 15.) doth affirm, that not only *Jerom* was of that mind with *Aerius*; (whose opinion was, that the Bishop and the Presbyter were equal and the same) but also, that *Ambrosius*, *Augustinus*, *Sedulius*, *Primasius*, *Chrysostomus*, *Theodoretus*, *Oecumenius*, and *Theophylactus* were of that same mind. *Atque ita (inquit Medina) isti viri, alioqui sanctissimi, & sanctarum Scripturarum consultissimi: quorum tamen sententiam prius in Aerio, deinde in waldensibus, postremo in Joanne Wiccliso, damnavit Ecclesia, &c.* Note here, that this hath been always accounted the common judgement of the *waldenses* of *wickliffe*, with his followers, whose judgement certainly is of great weight, seeing they were eminent witnesses against the Beast, whereof more may be spoken, Chap. 11. and he doth at large make out the agreement of these Fathers with *Aerius* in this point, to wit, that by Divine right there is no difference between Bishop and Presbyter. This testimony will be more clear, if we consider many of these testimonies themselves, as they are set down by *Sixtus Senensis*, *Bibliotheca sanctæ*, lib. 6. annotatione, 319, and 324. where he hath the words of many of these Authors, as agreeing with *Jerom*, whose testimony is most largely set down, and beside what was already cited from *Ambrose*, these words are added out of his Comments on 1 Tim. cap. 4. *Episcopi & Presbyteri una est ordinatio: (uterque enim Sacerdos est) sed Episcopus primus est, ut omnis Episcopus Presbyter sit, non tamen omnis Presbyter Episcopus. Ille enim Episcopus est, qui inter Presbyteros primus est*, which is not to shew any superiority of degree, but an orderly precedency which he that was the chief Presbyter had amongst others. He is also cited upon *Philip. 1. 1.* where he bringeth in, *Act. 20. 17.* and *28.* to confirm this, that Presbyters and Bishops were the same.

Beside these, we may add two more particular testimonies, The first is of *Jerom*, first, in his Epistle to *Euagrius*, where at large he asserteth and proveth this Truth: and when he propo- neth the Question, *Would ye have Authority?* he goeth

through these Scriptures, *Philip. 1. Act. 20. Tit. 1. 1 Tim. 4. 1 Pet. 5.* and from these places doth confirm, not only the titles to be common; but that the Presbyters were by Office Bishops: and for that cause he cites the Greek word, to wit, *ἐπισκοπος*, which in that place of *Peter* is applied to Presbyters, to shew the identity of the one office with the other: Yea, he he addeth many other places, as the 2. and 3. Epistles of *John*; and 1 Tim. 3. where (saith he) *de ordinatione Episcopi & Diaconi dicitur Presbyteris, omnino reticetur: quia in Episcopo & Presbytero continetur.* If it be asked, How this distinction did enter? He answers it in that Epistle, *quod autem postea, &c.* that is, that when afterward one came to be elected and preferred to the rest, it was done for the remedy of Schism. And it is observable, that this remedy is said by him to be after *Johns* writing of his Epistles, during which time there was no such difference. And he illustrateth it thus, as if the Deacons should peculiarly choose one from among themselves, whom they knew to be industrious and give him the title of Arch-deacon, for helping them in the manning of what belongs to their Office orderly: thus he. Which clearly sheweth what kind of precedency this is which he attributeth to the Bishop, even such as he would allow to a Deacon, that for some special end is advanced to some peculiar care by others. Again, he doth purposely handle this same thing in his Comments on *Titus 1.* where without any prejudice by the heat of dispute, having compared verse 5. with verse 7. he addeth, *idem est ergo Presbyter qui Episcopus: & antequam diaboli instinctu studia in religione ficerent, & diceretur in populis, ego sum Pauli, ego Apollo, ego autem Cepha, omnium Presbyterorum consilio Ecclesia gubernabatur. Postquam vero unusquisque eos quos baptizaverat suos putabat esse, non Christi, in toto orbe decretum est, ut unus de Presbyteris electus superponeretur cæteris; ad quem omnis Ecclesia cura pertineret; & Schismatum semina tollerentur.* And lest this assertion of his should be thought to be without warrant, he addeth, *putat aliquis, &c.* doth any think that this is not the mind of the Scripture, but our own? to wit, that a Bishop and Presbyter are one and the same, and that the one word, to wit, Bishop, denoteth the Office; and the other, to wit, Presbyter, the age? For then they used to be well stricken in years; and Presbyter signifieth Elder. And he doth subjoyn, in this place; the Scriptures formerly mentioned for confirming the same: which he doth not only cite; but solidly reasoneth the conclusion from them, and having cited *Acts 20.* he hath these words, observe here diligently, how calling the Presbyters of one City, to wit, *Ephesus*, he doth afterward stile them Bishops. And also maketh use of that, *Heb. 13. 17.* where submission and subjection is required to all that watch over souls, and, saith he, *ibi equaliter inter plures Ecclesiæ cura dividitur.* And lest it should be thought that he esteemed this difference, which afterward followed between Bishop and Presbyter, to be of Divine Institution (though in part he did then acknowledge some difference, *de facto*) he doth close with this, *sicut ergo Presbyteri sciunt se ex Ecclesiæ consuetudine ei qui sibi prepositus fuerit, esse subiectos: Ita Episcopi noverint se magis consuetudine, quam dispositionis dominicæ veritate, Presbyteris esse majores*, that is, as as Presbyters know themselves to be by the custome of the Church, subject to him that is set over them; so Bishops would know that they are above Presbyters, rather by custom, than by any verity of Divine disposition or appointment: and when he cometh again to the Text, he useth this transition, *videmus igitur qualis Presbyter, sive Episcopus, ordinandus sit.*

From which testimonies, these things are clear, 1. That there was no difference betwixt the names and offices of Bishops and Presbyters in the days of the Apostles. 2. That the difference was not begun by any Apostolick constitution; but upon Church-custome, the decrees of Counsels, and such other



grounds. 3. That although he acknowledgeth some difference for the time, as that Bishops were to ordain, from which Presbyters were restricted; yet that is clearly asserted by him not to flow from any Divine constitution, (for there can none be imagined after the Apostles dayes) but from some humane or Church constitution, as by the former warning both to Bishops and Presbyters wherewith he eloseth, is clear.

This testimony is so clear that it doth put many of the Popish adversaries to a stand. *Alfonso Castrensis* (as he is cited by *Bellarmin*, and *Sixtus Senensis*, in the places formerly mentioned) doth not stand to aver, that in this *Jerom* did err. And *Bellarmin* when he hath given one answer, to wit, that *Jerom* intended the change betwixt Bishops and Presbyters, to have begun upon the occasion of the first Schism at *Corinth*, because of his alluding to these words, *I am of Paul, I am of Apollo, &c.* and finding him afterward to maintain the same Doctrine from the Epistles of *Paul* to the *Philippians*, and *Titus*, and also from the Epistles of *Peter* and *John*, which were written long after the said Schism; to weaken his testimony, he saith, *observandum est sanctum Hieronimum in illa sua sententia non adeo constantem videri, &c.* whereas he is most constant, being by mentioning these words, he doth not pitch on that particular Schism at *Corinth*; but in allusion thereto, doth express the Schisms that followed thereafter. And we suppose there can be no infringing of these so direct and express testimonies: yet we may observe what estimation these men have really of the most eminent Fathers (whom they so much otherways cry up) when they differ from them.

This testimony upon *Titus* is the more observable, because, as both *Sixtus Senensis* hath it, and *Bellarmin* doth acknowledge, *Sedulius*, *Scotus*, and *Anselmus Cantuariensis Episcopus* do expound these words of *Paul* to *Titus*, in the same very words that are used by *Jerom*. And so the former testimony is not to be accounted the testimony of one, but the testimony of three, beside others, who in other words incline to *Jerom's* mind.

The second testimony is of that famous Father *Augustine*, who in his 19. Epistle (which is the last of his Epistles direct to *Jerom*, and is also in that order among *Jerom's* Epistles) when he is pressing *Jerom*, who was but a Presbyter to use freedom with him who was a Bishop, and to correct him wherein he was wrong, he doth urge it thus, *quanquam enim secundum bonorum vocabula, quæ jam Ecclesiæ usus obtinuit, Episcopatus Presbyterio major sit.*

In which words it is indeed asserted, that a Bishop was more than a Presbyter, at that time, yet the rise of that is shown to be from the use or custom which had now obtained place in the Church. Neither can that exception of *Bellarmin* and some others be of force, to wit, that *Augustine* doth compare, not the use of the Christian Church in that time with what was formerly, but the use of these words in the Christian Church with what was before Christ: and so the use of the Church, and Divine institution, according to this meaning, will be one: This (I say) doth most grossly contradict that Fathers intent: for, 1. His scope is to shew that though he was called a Bishop, and *Jerom* but a Presbyter, that yet indeed there was no difference, but only such as use and custom had brought in into the Church, whereas if we expound custom or use otherwise, *Augustine* would seem rather to assert and aggregate the distance that was between him and *Jerom*, than any way to diminish the same. When yet his scope is clear to lessen that distance of superiority that seemed to be between him and him because of these titles. 2. The very expression will bear the same, *quæ jam Ecclesiæ usus obtinuit, &c.* which necessarily importeth, that sometimes such difference was not in custom in the Church: and where will it be found in *Augustine*, that he compareth any custom of the Church after Christ with what was before,

as different customs of different times of the same Church? for to him, and almost all the Fathers, *usus*, or *consuetudo Ecclesiæ*, is ever taken, when given, as a ground of any practice, as contradistinguished from Divine institution, as in the last cited words of *Jerom* is clear. Also, it may have its own weight that he is now writing to *Jerom* whose judgement in these things was not unknown to him: he must therefore be supposed to use the same, as it was understood by him.

Also in that book, which is intituled, *Liber questionum Veteris & Novi Testamenti*, among *Augustine's* Works, *Quest. 101.* when he hath proven from 1 *Tim. 3.* the Bishop and Presbyter to be one, *quid est enim Episcopus nisi primus Presbyter?* and after he marketh, that although the Bishops used to stile Presbyters, *Compresbyteris*; yet, saith he, they never say to the Deacons *Condiaconi*. And whoever be the Author, it sheweth that in the Primitive times this title Bishop, was rather given as a note of respect to some eminent Ministers, than as that which did constitute a different Office or Officer, especially *jure divino*. And that there was another kind of identity between Ministers and Bishops than any of them and Deacons, though Ministers virtually comprehend that Office also.

It is like it may be objected, that all antiquity did condemn *Aerius*, whose opinion is said to be this, that he took away all distinction betwixt Bishop and Presbyter? *Answ.* It is the judgement of learned *Rivetius* in his *Catholicus Orthodoxus*, in his reply to the same charge given by *Ballius*, *tractatu secundo Quest. 22.* That *Aerius* was condemned by them, not simply as maintaining any thing contrary to truth, in this, but as imprudently in practice brangling the order then established amongst them, to the hazard of their union. And there are two clear proofs of this; 1. Because where the same tenents were maintained, as in *Jerom* and others; yet where these persons continued in the unity of the Church, they were never branded with any name of Heresie for the same. 2. Because even *Augustine*, who reckons up this Heresie of *Aerius*, doth yet acknowledge this difference to be by no Divine constitution, as we have formerly seen. And who will consider the rolls of Heresies, set down by these Fathers, will find that oftentimes such are reckoned among Hereticks, who much rather ought to be accounted Schismatics. It is observable also, that even adversaries grant that none of these Fathers do condemn him for denying that distinction to be *jure divino*, (for which see *Esius*, lib. 4. pag. 35.) but for denying it simply. And so now we leave our second consideration.

The third consideration, is, that there is some footsteps of this identity of Bishop and Presbyter in the most corrupt Writings of the most impure School-men: which may appear in these three, 1. In that generally, *Episcopacy* is holden to be no distinct order from *Presbytery*; and that *Presbytery*, or *Priesthood* (as they speak) is the highest order in all their Hierarchy. And this is current as the Doctrine of *Lambardus* the Master of Sentences, *Hugo*, *Aquinas*, *Thomas Waldensis*, and generally of all the *Thomists* at least. And though they seem to make Bishops to be of a more eminent degree; yet by *Esius*, and some others alledged by him, this is not thought sufficient to distinguish one Office from an other. And indeed considering their Doctrine in all the other branches, or orders of their Hierarchy, it will well follow, that these two, being the same order, cannot be admitted to be distinct Officers, being in no other order such a distinction is admitted.

2. We may gather it from their acknowledging of this to have been a truth in the Primitive times. Thus *Lambardus*, the great Master of Sentences, lib. 4. distinct. 24. when he giveth the reason why only two orders, to wit, *Presbyteratus*, and *Diaconatus*, are mentioned by way of excellency in the Canons, and are called, *Ordines Sacri*: he subjoyneth this as the reason, *quia hos solos primitiva Ecclesia legimus habuisse, & de his solis*

olis præceptum Apostoli habemus : and doth for this end cite, 1 Tim. 3. and Act. 6. Again, that great School-man Cajetan, on Titus 1. 5. and 7. hath these words, *ubi adverte eundem gradum, idemque officium, significari a Paulo nomine Presbyteri, & nomine Episcopi : Nam præmisit, idcirco reliquit te in Creta ut constituas Presbyteros : & modo probando regulam, dicit, oportet enim Episcopum, &c.* By which words, the identity of these two offices is most clearly asserted, and confirmed : and this also will be found to be the mind of many more.

If it be asked, how then these more eminent degrees of Bishop, Arch-bishop, Patriarch, &c. did enter into the Church; & how these differences have arisen? Ans. The same Lombardus in the same place, *de quadripartito ordine Episcoporum*, doth omit his former alledging of the custom of the Old Testament, and other things which he abused, and out of Isidorus layeth it down thus, *horum autem discretio à Gentilibus introducta videtur, qui suos flamines, alios simpliciter flamines, alios Arch-flamines, alios proto-flamines appellabant. Sacerdotes enim Gentilium, flamines dicebantur, &c.* which is in sum, this difference seemeth to be brought in from the Gentiles who used so to stile their Priests, as to call some Priests simply, others Arch-priests, others again first-Priests, &c. and considering that the root of the Roman Hierarchie, to wit, Papacy, and the ordering thereof, did arise from the superstitious Christians their imitating of the heathenish *Pontifex maximus* (whereof we may see some what, chap. 13. lect. 4.) it is no wonder that these inferiour pillars be of the same kind. And if there were any shew from the Word for such differences, it would seem that this great Master had not gone to the Gentiles to be beholden to them for the same. Also Estius when he is to prove the superiority of Bishops, he hath these words, *quod autem jure divino sint Episcopi Presbyteris superiores, et si non ita clarum est à sacris literis, aliunde tamen abunde probari potest, &c.* in lib. 4. sentent. distinct. 24. and so he citeth Popes constitutions, Canons of Councils, &c.

In the third place, this will appear from the considering of the answers that generally are given by them to these places of Scripture alledged, whereby it is concluded that a Bishop and Presbyter are the same; which are generally one of these two, 1. Some say, that though the office in the Primitive times was distinct; yet the titles of Presbyter and Bishop, were common. But we have found already this to be a miserable shift: because, 1. This identity of the names so circumstantiated, proveth the identity of the offices as was said; because these places do not only apply the titles indifferently; but do indifferently apply the duties, qualifications, and every other thing that belongeth to such officers, and offices; and there is nothing spoken of the one in Scripture, but it is also spoken of the other, neither any thing required as a qualification in, or duty from the one, but is also done in reference to the other, and that expressly. A second answer, is that of Scotus, and some others who follow him, in lib. 4. sententiarum, distinct. 24. *questione unica*; where he endeavoureth thus to remove that Objection, because (saith he) at first Believers were few, and so few Ministers were needful, and it was not necessary that there should be Officers instituted in every degree; but (saith he) when the Believers did multiply, then it was necessary. Where there is a double fault, 1. That contrary to the Scripture it is asserted that then the Church was not numerous, when as yet very soon the Apostles were necessitated to choose Deacons for their help. 2. That it supponeth, that when the Church is lesse numerous, there may not only be fewer Officers, but that she may want some wholly of such and such a degree. Adde, that it supponeth *de facto*, that the Church in the Apostles dayes was not so compleatly constituted in respect of the kind of Officers as afterward: which is altogether inconsistent with that perfect plat-form of the Church in the Primitive Apostolick times. And when such answers are made by the

learnedst of that party to such Arguments, what is it, but indeed the granting, upon the matter, that there was no such distinction, or distinct offices of Bishop and Presbyter in the Primitive times in use and practice in the Church?

Our fourth and last consideration, is, That this confounding of Angel and Minister in this place, is necessary from the consideration of the scope and other circumstances of the Text, whatever might be said from other places. For, 1. We cannot see how otherways these Epistles can be profitably expounded and applied with relation to the state of these particular Churches, except this be, as was hinted at the entry of this Question. 2. It is certain that our Lords purpose, is, to point out the condition of the ordinary Ministers of the Churches as well as of the people, or of any supposed particular Bishop. And if this be the Lords scope, then they must be comprehended under this Title Angel, to whom the Epistles are directed: and if so, then what is spoken of the Angel, must be applied to them indifferently, seeing the Lord maketh no difference: therefore, either we must altogether leave out Ministers from being considered in these Epistles, or we must thus apply to them what is spoken to, and of, the Angels. 3. What is spoken here to, or of, the Angels, will agree to what in other Scriptures is spoken to, and of, ordinary Ministers; as to Preach the Word, to convince gain-sayers, to censure the unruly, to fulfil their Ministrie, to have an open door, and such like. All which we will find applied to ordinary Ministers in other Scriptures; and therefore cannot but be so here also. 4. Seeing in no other Scripture there is expresse distinction made between Bishop and Presbyter; and seeing it is usual to John to speak of Presbyter or Elder, as of the highest office that was to be in ordinary in the Church; (for which cause, he calleth himself an Elder) and seeing also he doth never mention preheminance in one Officer above another, but in the person of Diotrophes (and that with indignation) as may be seen in his second and third Epistles. And lastly, Seeing he never mentioneth Bishop, or any other Teaching officer but Presbyter in his Doctrine and Writings, Is it probable that under this figurative stile, in a Prophetical book any other Officer than a Presbyter, especially such as should have preheminance over his brethren, should be understood, and upon this place alone be grounded, it being ever most safe in such obscure figurative places to expound the same by what is more clear? And it would seem strange, that the institution of Presbyters; yea, and of Deacons with their qualifications, &c. should be so clear and expresse in the Word, and that yet this Superiour Officer should be so darkly pointed at, and there be no qualifications, directions or rules given concerning him, but what are to be borrowed from the inferiour Pastor. 5. It would also, upon this supposition, be difficult to find out who these particular Bishops could be: For, 1. some make Timothy to be dead, and John now to be Bishop of Ephesus: and can John himself, write to himself, being at that time not in Ephesus? 2. If we take Timothy to be the Angel mentioned, will it be charitable to account him to have fallen so from his first love? yea, supposing it to be Onesimus, it will be hard to construct so of him: And so we might go through the rest. Beside, there is in all these Epistles a special siveness and sympathie between the condition of the Angel and Church: therefore what is directed to the Angel at the entry, is applied to the Churches in the close of every Epistle: yea, these Angels are supposed to have much immediat influence upon the conditions good or ill of these Churches. Now, it may be conceived how the Churches and their particular Ministers may come to be of the same temper; but it cannot be conceived how it can be so ordinarily between a Diocesan Bishop and many Congregations under him: for, experience hath proven that oftentimes there may be a cold dead Bishop, and yet where the Ministers are lively,



lively, the people may be in good condition: but usually when Ministers are lifelesse, although the Bishop were lively, yet are the people for the generality of them but in a dead condition. Lastly, If what is spoken to Angels here, be to be appropriated to one Bishop, then it behoved to be said, that it were only the Bishop that had the door opened to him in Preaching, as in *Philadelphia*; that he only were commended for his labour and patience, as in *Ephesus*; that he only did convert souls, and in that peculiar sense, were said to have few unspotted persons under him, as in the Epistle to *Sardis*, &c. And if these things cannot be ascribed to Bishops, so understood, but must agree to all Ministers in such cases, Then must the title *Angel* be so applied in these Epistles.

We know these things are more fully and accurately made out by many others, to whom we refer the Reader: and in particular, to that accurate Peice of the Ministers of the Province of London, called *Jus Divinum Ministerii Evangelici*, and to the Books that are frequently mentioned therein: for, it is not our purpose to insist in this: only we conceive that from these considerations there is ground sufficient for our exposition and application of these Epistles. It is not unworthy the marking also, that *Augustine*, expounding that word, in the 104. Psalm (which is to him the 103.) *He maketh his Angels Ministers*, &c. he doth understand by *Angels*, *Prædicatores Evangelii*, or Preachers of the Gospel, without any further distinction or title; which certainly must be done with respect to this place. I shall only adde a word of that zealous, and pious writer, Learned Mr. *Boyd*, who having clearly made out this by many Scriptures and Citations of Fathers both against Papists and others, who (saith he) in this were *papizantes*, doth close with a saying of famous *Whitaker* against *Sanders*, who having cited *Jerom's* reason for the bringing in of Bishops for the preventing of Schism, *Hoc Veri-verbum gravissimè subjungit* (saith he) *sed ipso morbo deterius pene remedium fuit: Nam ut primo unus Presbyter reliquis prælatus est, & factus Episcopus; ita postea unus Episcopus, reliquis est prælatus. Sic ista consuetudo Papam cum sua Monarchia peperit, & paulatim in Ecclesiam invexit.* And then doth subjoyn of himself, *Nec ego sanè video, si semel hoc remedium, ut ad schismata vel tollenda vel præcavenda necessarium, admittamus & amplectamur, cur aut quomodo gradus sistendus sit, donec ad unum summum Patriarcham sive Pontificem Oecumenicum, qui solus toti præsit Hierarchiæ ecclesiasticæ, tandem deveniamus, atque hoc Italus velit, & magno mercetur Abaddon ille Romanus, qui cum suis affectis, eodem hoc utuntur argumento, ad Monarchiam suam in Ecclesiâ firmandam.*

The same Learned Author also, coming to consider this place of the Revelation, after other answers, doth assert, that under this title *Angel*, a plurality of Ministers, may be understood, (as we formerly did expound the place) whom Christ writeth to in the singular number, 1. That He might shew that there was an unity amongst the Ministers, as well as amongst the members: and so He keepeth the number of them, proportionably to the number of the Churches. And, 2. Because, by naming them so, the Lord would have them minded that some way they did constitute but one, and are, in respect of their oversight, so to concur in caring for the one Flock, as being each of them Ministers thereof, in whole; and in particular, written unto by Jesus Christ, for that end. And so this naming of *Angel*, in the singular number, will rather remove all supposed difference amongst them, than establish the same: because so what is written to one, is written to every *Angel*, or Minister, in these Churches: which is the thing that at first we asserted.

An Author of late (to wit, Doctor *Hamond*) among many other strange things which he hath, doth take an unheard-of way to evite the former Arguments: and because he cannot deny but the Scripture doth take Bishops and Presbyters for

one and the same, he doth therefore, first, acknowledge this to be truth: But, 2. asserteth that both are to be understood of Diocesan Bishops, and not of Presbyters, as they are understood now. And therefore, 3. doth deny that in the Apostles times there was any middle sort of Presbyters, as he calleth them, betwixt Diocesan Bishops and Deacons. 4. That many mentioned in the Scripture, and these seven Angels in particular, were Metropolitan Bishops, having power over Diocesan Bishops. All which he asserteth with a great deal of confidence, and doth illustrate the then Government of the Church from the fourth Chapter of this Book: which, to him holdeth forth, 1. The Metropolitan of *Jerusalem*, as signified by the person that sitteth upon the Throne. 2. Four and twenty Diocesan Bishops sitting on Thrones by him, which (saith he) no doubt was exactly the number of the inferiour Bishops of *Judea*, although the same cannot be made out by History. These are represented by the four and twenty Elders. 3. Seven spirits, signifie the seven Deacons which were in that Church: thus (saith he) was the estate of the Church in *John's* time, and no other Officer was as yet instituted.

Although these be vanities beyond any thing which he condemneth in Mr. *Brightman* himself, and exceedingly unsuitable to the scope of the Spirit; and though there can be little expectation to convince any who so unwarrantably asserteth their own imagination as a certain truth, without any warrant from the Word, or any History; yet we must say somewhat, seeing the stresse lyeth here, whether there were any Presbyters in the dayes of the Apostles, in the notion that we now take *Presbyters*? or, whether all preaching Officers were then only Bishops with Jurisdiction, as he doth understand them? For if there were Presbyters in this notion as we speak; and if, according to his own principles, Bishops and Presbyters were one and the same, Then it will follow that at that time they were both preaching Presbyters or Elders. For, in pleading that there were such Presbyters, we purpose not to plead for any middle order, as he calleth it; but, according as himself saith, the asserting of a Lord-bishop to have been instituted in these dayes, doth necessarily deny the office of Preaching-presbyters to have then been in the Church of Christ: so, upon the contrary, it will follow, that if it be made out that there was such an Officer as this Presbyter in the Church of Christ, Then this of Bishops, as distinct from it, must also fall. Now, to make out that there was such Presbyters in the Church of Christ in the Apostles dayes, who yet were not Bishops in his sense, we propose these considerations.

First, Consider the general harmony of all the Ancients, of all the School-men, generally all that ever wrote since Reformation: for, I suppose, never any questioned but that there were Preaching-presbyters in the Church as we take them: and cannot Episcopacy be established except all these foundations be overturned; without which yet there will not be much to say for it?

Secondly, Consider the principles of that party: for, generally, they do account the Apostles to have been in the degree of Bishops, and the Disciples to have been in the place of ordinary Pastors; also that Bishops Jurisdiction over Ministers, is instituted and established in *Timothy* and *Titus*, their ordaining, admonishing, reproving, &c. of ordinary Ministers. And if there were none such in the Apostles dayes, they cannot be said to have had power over such: and so either these Arguments must stand, and this Authors assertion must fall; or, if it stand, they must fall: by which there is a losse to that party however.

Thirdly, It may be considered how that Authors ground can be reconciled with Scripture, wherein the office and actual being of such an Officer as a Presbyter, as we take it, is sufficiently

ciently clear: for which see, First, these Scriptures that do most fully hold forth the distinct offices of the Church under the New Testament, as, *Eph. 1. 4. 11, 12.* besides Apostles and Evangelists, he gave some to be *Pastors* and *Teachers*. Now, by *Pastors* and *Teachers*, must be understood *Ministers*, as we take them; because they are such as were by feeding and teaching to edifie Christs Body to the end of the world: which cannot be restricted to Bishops as understood by him; otherways the Pastor shall not have access to edifie Christs Church for any time to come. And if Pastors be here understood, then they must be understood as then in being, as the other Officers that are mentioned, and to have had their beginning immediately after Christs Ascension. The second place is, *1 Cor. 12. 28, 29.* where the Apostle speaketh of the Lords instituting Teachers in His Church, as distinct from other Officers. And what can these Teachers be but such as we account ordinary Ministers, their title bearing out their office especially to be in Teaching? A third place, is, *Rom. 12. 6, 7, 8.* where he that teacheth, and he that exhorteth, are spoken of, and are required to wait upon their Offices; and certainly cannot but be understood of ordinary Pastors, whose special duty consists in these. And considering the Doctors paraphrase upon these verses, we conceive that either there he expounds them of such as taught for the time, which do confirm what we said; or, doth make it a direction to such as afterward might be called to that Office; whereby he would insinuate that there was none such in being for the time: this is expressly contrary to the letter of the Text, which speaketh of *exhorting* and *teaching*, as present duties of some Officer, as well as *ruling* and *showing mercy*, &c. are spoken of.

The second ground from Scripture, is, such places as hold forth the Apostles to have placed Presbyters in every Church, as *Act. 14. 23.* Now, it must either be said that there was no Church in the New Testament, but Diocesan Churches; or, we must say that the ordaining Elders in every Church, must be understood of ordinary Presbyters or Pastors: for, it is clear in Scripture that there were many Churches, which were not in very considerable Cities as that in *Cenchrea*, *Rom. 16. 1.* which yet cannot be said to want Officers, as also these of *Judea* and *Galatia*: and can it be said that there was no Church in any Village or part of the Country? Beside, many Churches are mentioned to be in *Corinth*, *1 Cor. 14. 34.* and certainly all had Teachers, and yet it cannot be thought that they were all Diocesan Bishops; they must therefore be understood of ordinary Pastors.

The third sort of Scriptures, are these that speak of many Elders in one City, as in *Ephesus*, *Act. 20. 17, 18.* and *Philippi*, *Phil. 1. 1.* in *Jerusalem*, in *Corinth*, &c. where it is clear, that beside the extraordinary Officers that were there, there were also many ordinary Teachers and Presbyters.

I know that Author will repell this easily, by assering that all these were Metropolitan Churches, and that these other Presbyters were inferior Bishops, and that these Epistles, are not to be understood to be directed to these particular Towns, which are mentioned only, but to all the Country, whereof these were Metropolitan Cities and Churches. But to this we oppose, 1. How can that be made to appear from any ground in Scripture, where neither the word *Metropolitan*, nor the thing is hard of? 2. This maketh two sorts of Prelatical Bishops, when yet, whatever be understood by Bishops, in the Word it is clear they are but of one degree: and therefore the same rules for ordination, for qualifications, trial and every other thing, are indifferently given for all. 3. This contrareth the very letter of the Text, to say that when he writeth to *Philippi*, or *Thessalonica*, he writeth to all *Macedonia*, &c. For the Apostle in his Inscriptions putteth great difference between his writing to a particular Church or City, and his writing to several Churches

in a Country, as by his directions to *Corinth*, *Philippi*, *Coloss.* &c. in the one case, and his directions not to any Church in a particular Town, but to the Churches in *Galatia* and to all the Hebrews, in the other case, is clear: which is done, to shew that the one respecteth a particular Town and the Christians in it, and the other the Christians in a whole Country. And certainly, if we will mark how he distinguisheth *Thessalonica* from *Macedonia* and *Achaia*, *1 Thess. 1. 7.* and how (*Col. 4. 16.*) he commandeth to read that Epistle in the Church of the *Laodiceans*, which yet was not far from this Town, it will appear that he understood the particular Churches which were named. Yet it is clear that there were moe Bishops in *Philippi*, and moe Ministers in *Thessalonica*, as, *1 Epist. chap. 5. vers. 12.* Now to put his gloss upon the words. in that place (saith he) *Thessalonica* was a *Metropolis*, and all the Christian Churches and Bishops in *Macedonia* were written unto, when *Thessalonica* was written unto; How then shall *vers. 7.* and *8.* of the first Chapter be paraphrased, so that ye were examples to all that believe in *Macedonia* and *Achaia*? This would be the meaning, ye Christians of *Macedonia*, are examples to all the Christians of *Macedonia*: which were absurd. Yea, himself doth paraphrase it thus, and this in so eminent a manner, that your example had an happy influence, raised an emulation in all the Christians of the other Cities in *Macedonia*, &c. whereby it appeareth that the Church of the *Thessalonians*, is to be understood of the Christians of that particular City, and that as distinct from other particular Cities in *Macedonia*. Lastly, There are diverse Ministers of *Coloss*: for, *Col. 4. 12.* *Epaphras* is mentioned as one of their number, who certainly was a Preacher: and again, *vers. 17.* *Archippus* is spoken of. And if there were not plurality of Ministers in one place, What can be understood by these that are spoken of, *Phil. 4. 15.* &c. who Preach Christ, some sincerely, and some out of envy? These, it seemeth, were all in *Rome*; and yet it will be hard to say that they were all Bishops in the sense pleaded-for.

A fourth sort of Scriptures, are these that give Directions and Rules for the calling, and trying of the qualifications of Bishops and Presbyters, &c. Now, if these same Directions warrand to call and ordain Ministers in all after-times, and if the same Rules that are given in the Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, ought now to be observed, and the same qualifications to be enquired-for in ordinary Ministers, &c. by vertue of these Rules; Then it will follow that Presbyters in these places are to be understood of ordinary Ministers: But the former is true, except we will deny that any Directions are given at all for trying and ordaining Ministers in the Scripture. Beside, the Apostles scope in laying down these Rules, is, to direct Officers how to walk in the admission of all others unto the end of the world.

A fourth consideration which we propose, is, that this denial of Preaching-presbyters, is contrary to reason, and is founded upon false suppositions. For, it supponeth, 1. the number of Christians to have ben few. 2. That an office may be afterward instituted in the Church, which was not instituted in the Apostles days. Now, let it be considered in reason, 1. If the Christians who were so numerous in many places, as in *Jerusalem*, *Ephesus*, *Corinth*, *Antioch*, &c. can be supposed to have been fed sufficiently by one Bishop? it being clear that there were many thousands, as hath been abundantly made out by that rich Piece, Learned Mr. *Rutherford* his *Dueright of Presbytery*, and that acute Piece *Jus divinum regiminis Ecclesiastici*; where also the plurality of Officers is abundantly evinced; wherefore there needeth no more of this. Only we may observe from *Act. 13. 1.* that in *Antioch*, beside extraordinary Officers, there was a plurality of ordinary Teachers, which by no means can be understood of Bishops. 2. It may be considered what the case of these Churches would have been, when



one Pastor was absent from them, as oftentimes it was by being sent in messages to the Apostles and otherways: can it be said that these Churches were without Preaching-officers and Ordinances of the Word and Sacraments all that time? yet that must be said, except we say there were other Preaching-officers labouring amongst them. 3. Is it agreeable to reason, to think that all Churches were of one measure so as to be served with one man? or, that where some few number of Christians were converted and did combine amongst themselves, they behoved either to be a Diocesan Church, which is impossible, or to be none at all, which is contrary to the way of the Gospel? 4. I ask, If the case of the Christian Church was more perfect with Presbyters than without them? If it be more perfect with them, then it must be said the Primitive Apostolick Church was not in the most perfect form, which will be against reason. If it be more perfect without them, then they were unreasonably brought and kept into the Church: both which are absurd.

A fifth consideration, is, That the denying of Presbyters and Ministers in this ordinary notion to have been instituted in the Apostles days, doth go near to strike at the very root of Christianity and overturn the course of the Gospel: for, experience teacheth us, that the great work of conversion in the Church hath been, and is, carried on by such Presbyters: and this assertion doth at once remove the same: For, 1. it denieth them to have been instituted in the Apostles days as a mean for converting of souls; and what more can be said to overturn them? 2. Seing he denies this institution to have been when John wrote this Revelation (*chap. 4. Annotation.*) what warrant can be afterward given for their instituting? yea, it cannot be shown from History or Writings of the Ancients, when or how they were first instituted; and therefore in sum they come to be a humane institution; and so, such an excellent mean of edification is overturned.

A sixth consideration, is, That this assertion seemeth to destroy it self, and to imply a contradiction: for, if there was but one Preaching-bishop in every one of these Churches to Preach and administer the Sacraments in the same, then either he was equal to the same, the Congregations not being numerous, and so he discharged ministerial duties without having jurisdiction over any other Preaching-presbyter (of which there

were none according to this opinion) or over any other particular Church, and if so, he is the very person whom we call an ordinary Pastor, or Apostolick Bishop, of one particular Congregation: and in this sense, we grant there was no other Pastor, or Presbyter: and being so understood, this Prelatical or Diocesan-bishop having power over many particular Congregations, must fall to the ground: or, it must be said, that this Bishop had a charge beyond what is possible to one man to deal with, or, had Christians and Officers in diverse places and Churches subject to him, which will also be contrary to the assertions of the same Author. Now, if it implicateth not, to say that he was a Diocesan Bishop, and yet had rule but over one Congregation; and to say that he had power and jurisdiction over other Preaching-officers, and so was not a Preaching-officer of the lowest degree; and that yet there was no other inferior Preaching-officer: which necessarily implyeth that that Bishop was of the lowest degree. If (I say) these things implicate not, we cannot tell what doth: for, the one thing saith, he hath none under him; the other saith, he is not one of the lowest.

Neither will any have this to say, that there was an inferior order to be instituted after the Apostles days, over which these Bishops were to govern. For, 1. It must be made out that there is an appointment in the Word for instituting of such an Officer, which was not then in the Church. 2. It will yet follow, that during the time of the Apostles, this Bishop did discharge the office of a Presbyter, and so was the lowest Preaching-officer in the Church, and that therefore the contradiction would have been still obvious in that time, and they had been liable unto this same argument. 3. If they had then any jurisdiction over Presbyters, it behoved to be a *non-ens*, while they had no being, and that for many years: which looketh not like Christs way in giving talents to men. And indeed when all is considered, seing these Bishops did nothing but what we allow ordinary Ministers to do, and had the same qualifications appointed for them, and the same place in the Church, to wit, to be next before to Deacons, and have only charge of particular Congregations, and such like. It will be most safe to conclude them to have been *Bishops* and *Presbyters* in the sense that formerly we laid down. And so we leave any further consideration of this Author.

### Concerning the way of Covenanting with God, and of a sinners obtaining Justification before Him.

THIS last Epistle, directed to the Church of *Laodicea*, doth contain a short sum of the Gospel, and Gods way of engaging sinners to Him. It will therefore be meet to take some more particular consideration thereof: For, here, 1. we have man described in his sinful condition, as *miserable, naked, poor*; and withal, *blind* and *ignorant* of the same. 2. We have the remedy proposed, to wit, *gold*, and *white raiment*, &c. that is, Christ and His righteousness, which is the great promise of the Covenant of Grace, as the mids leading to the Injoying of God. 3. There is the condition on which this is offered, that is, believing, expressed under the terms of *buying*, *opening to Him*, *hearing His voice*, &c. 4. There are motives whereby the acceptance of this offer upon such terms is pressed, and that both from the necessity thereof, and hazard if it be slighted, and from the many advantages that do accompany the accepting thereof. 5. We have the duties that are called for upon this acceptance, to wit, *zeal* and *repentance*, which are comprehensive of all.

This doth hold forth Gods way of Covenanting with a sinful person, whereby the guilt of his sin, and the curse following

thereupon, are removed: Which we may conceive in this order, 1. Man is supposed not only to be sinful, but also obnoxious to the curse of God, and, in his appearance before Gods Justice, to have that sentence standing against him. 2. There being no remedy possible upon mans side, as a satisfaction to that Justice, there is an external righteousness provided, to wit, the satisfaction of the Mediator, which being imputed to the sinner, is in law to be accepted as satisfactory for him by virtue of the Covenant of Grace; and by virtue thereof, he is to be absolved, and discharged as if he himself had satisfied: this is the meritorious cause of our Justification. 3. This satisfaction of the Mediator, is not imputed to all, nor to any, but upon the terms agreed upon, to wit, that it be received, and rested upon, Therefore the Gospel is Preached; and this righteousness is not only revealed therein, but offered thereby to all who shall by Faith receive the same: in which respect, the Gospel, as it is contained in the Word, and the Preaching thereof, is commonly called the external instrumental cause of our Justification. 4. When by the Power of Gods Spirit, the sinner is brought to receive this offer, and to rest upon this righteousness,

as the onely ground of his peace; and his whole defence against the Law before the Justice of God; then, according to the offer, he becometh interested in this righteousness, and Christ becometh his righteousness, who is, by this receiving of Him, put on by the Believer; and by this, he may plead absolution from the challenges of the Law before Gods Justice, as a debtor may plead absolution from his debt upon his instructing the Cautioner to have paid it. And in this respect, Faith is called the condition of the Covenant: because it is upon this condition that Justification is offered to us therein; and upon this condition, God becometh our God, and Christ our Righteousness: and it is also called the instrumental cause of our Justification, because it acteth by receiving Christ, as He is holden forth in the Word: and if that be justly called the external instrumental cause, which doth offer him for our righteousness, Then may Faith well be called the Internal instrumental cause; because it doth receive Him for that same end, and because by this receiving, He becometh our Righteousness, upon which our Justification is grounded. Hence, 5. upon this receiving of Christ, and presenting of His Righteousness for our defence before Gods Justice, that righteousness and satisfaction is imputed to us, and accounted for ours; and upon this, our sins are pardoned, and we absolved before God: and this is that wherein formally our Justification consisteth: and this is the end why this counsel is proposed, that by receiving of this offered righteousness, this may be attained. This way of restoring of sinners by Grace, is often set forth by way of mutual bargain as in *Covenanting, Treating by Ambassadors, Marrying, Buying*, and such like. All which do import a mutual closing of a bargain upon mutual terms: and thus it is expressed, to shew, not wherein formally our Justification doth consist; but to shew the way and terms by which we may come at it, and upon which we close with God: and in this respect, Faith is called the condition of the Covenant of Grace; because it supplieth that place, and hath in it that which ordinarily a condition hath, that is proposed in making of a mutual bargain: sometimes also, it is set forth under legal expressions, as to lybel an accusation against, to charge and arraign a sinner before Justice, and then to absolve him from that charge in opposition to condemnation: and thus, sin is called debt; and to punish for it, is to exact or require satisfaction: and Christ in that respect, is called the Cautioner or Surety; and His suffering, satisfying, the pardoning of the sinner, is called justifying, or absolving, in opposition to condemning; and the deriving of this from Christ, is called imputation, or to repute the sinner righteous upon Christs satisfying for him; or, it is the reckoning of Christs satisfaction on the account of the sinner. All which expressions, are borrowed from the way of legal and judicial procedour before men. The first way sheweth how we become friends with God, to wit, by Covenanting with Him in Christ Jesus. The second sheweth a prime benefit which doth flow from that friendship, to wit, our Justification. These two are not to be conceived different things, or successive in time, (much less to be separated;) but as they be different wayes of holding forth the same thing, whereof the one doth especially relate to the means, the other to the end, and that so, as Grace and Justice may be seen to go alongst in this great business, and that a sinner may be helped to conceive of the same the more distinctly when he hath it moulded in the terms and forms used among men, and that under diverse considerations; that so he may the more satisfyingly comprehend this mystery of free Justification. Concerning which, in the general, we say,

1. That the immediate meritorious cause of our Justification, is Christs Righteousness, we take for granted: for it is the gold here that maketh rich, without which the dyvour could not pay his debt; it is the raiment which covereth our na-

kedness: and therefore the righteousness of the Saints, must be a put on, communicated, external and imputed righteousness: so that, supposing a man to be pursued before the barr of Gods Justice, there is no defence can be proposed but Christs satisfaction, which onely will be a relevant exception in that Court; which in *Pauls* example is clear, *Philip. 3. 9.* as, if it were asked, *Paul*, what wilt thou flie to in that day? *Onely to be found in Him*, (saith he) *not having my own righteousness, which is by the works of the Law, but that which is by Faith in Christ.* Thus, Christ is our Righteousness, and we are righteous in Him; as He was made sin for us: for, that opposition (2 *Corinth. 5. 21.*) doth evince this: but our sins were imputed to Him, and so were the immediate ground, upon which He was found lyable to Justice: in that same manner therefore, His Righteousness must be the immediate cause of our being absolved, seeing His Righteousness must be transferred to us, as our sins were to Him, as is said.

2. That this Righteousness of the Mediator, is immediately imputed to us, hath also been accounted a truth amongst the Orthodox hitherto, that is, that as a Cautioners paying of the debt, being instructed in a Court, is sufficient for absolving of the debtor from the Creditors pursuit; because, in the Law, the Cautioners paying in the debtors name, is reckoned as if the debtor had paid it; and so it is imputed to him and accepted for him: so it is here. And this way of imputing Christs Righteousness immediately, doth serve exceedingly, 1. to humble the sinner, when that whereby he is justified, is not in himself; this being certain that we are more proud of what is supposed to be in us, than of what is imputed to us; even as a dyvour hath less to boast of, when the Cautioners payment is immediately imputed to him for his absolution, than if by his industry he had procured something to pay for himself, although the stock had been freely bestowed on him by the Cautioner. 2. It serveth to commend Christ, and to bound all boasting and glorying in Him, who is our *wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, Redemption, &c.* 1 *Corinth. 1. 30.* for this very end, *That he who glorieth, might glory in the Lord.* 3. This riddeth marches between the Righteousness of the two Covenants, that the one is inherent and consisteth in Works, that is, as the Apostle speaketh, (*Tit. 3. vers. 5.*) the Righteousness, or somewhat which we our selves have done; the other, is without us, and cometh by imputation: and so is not onely distinguished from our own Righteousness; but opposed to it, *Philip. 3. vers. 9.* And although this truth be misrepresented by many; yet we judge it to be impregnable; and that in the great Day the decision will be found favorable thereto, when onely happy shall they be that shall be thus found in Christ. Thus therefore, we are to conceive the terms of the Gospel, as if a debauched dyvour, were ready to be apprehended having nothing to pay, suppose one should offer to undertake for him and pay the debt, so as he might be liberated, upon condition that he should acknowledge his benefactor, and plead ever his defence against the pursuit upon the Cautioners payment, and the discharge procured by Him: in this respect, the Cautioners payment is the meritorious cause whereby such a man is absolved, to wit, because that payment is reckoned for him, or imputed to him; yet his pleading that defence, or producing of that discharge, immediately, may be said instrumentally to procure it, because it is not the Cautioners payment simply that is sustained, as a relevant defence in judgement, till that be instructed, and except the defence be founded thereon, for, so the Law provideth: so, it is not Christs satisfying simply, but His satisfaction, pleaded by Faith, and fled unto, that justifieth; for so the Law of Faith hath enacted; yet the producing of such a discharge, meriteth nothing, but giveth a legal ground of right to the cause that doth merit, and so to what is merited. And the Lord hath



appointed this to be the condition of Justification, to wit, the pleading of Christs satisfaction before the bar. immediately : for, 1. that stopped all mouths ; and none can produce that satisfaction, but they must necessarily acknowledge emptiness in themselves, Justice and Grace in God, and love and fulness in the Mediator. 2. The pleading of this, sheweth a complete, perfect, equal, evangelick, Righteousness in all, whereas if it were any thing in us that were accounted so, then it would not be equal (if perfect) which cannot be said of that which is our Righteousness ; or, that one man hath better ground to be justified upon, and a better Righteousness than another.

3. That Faith is necessary for Justification, so that none can expect to be justified but Believers, hath been also hitherto almost amongst all uncontroversied, till that of late *Antinomians* have opposed it : But the Scripture is very express, 1. in limiting all the promises of pardon to a Believer, 2. in cursing all that believe not, and declaring them to be under the curse, 3. in placing Faith correlatively taken, in the room that Works had in the first Covenant, which must be in reference to Justification itself, and not the sense thereof only, 4. in asserting that we believe that we may be justified, *Galat. 2. 16, &c.* So that there needeth not much speaking to this, beside, that many things spoken of Repentance, may be applied here. And if it be found, that Faith is either the condition of the Covenant of Grace, or the instrumental cause of Justification, This will necessarily follow, that there is no Justification without it. I know there are some Divines that use different expressions here ; yet seeing they also oppose *Antinomians*, we will not now stick on that.

There is more difficulty in conceiving of the manner how Faith concurrereth : that there is some eminency in it, is acknowledged both by Papists, who account it a radical grace, having influence on all other graces, and so having special influence on that which they call Justification ; and also by some others, who, making works with it to be conditions of the new Covenant, do yet acknowledge a special aptitude in it, for applying of Christs Righteousness ; and that therefore it is the principal condition, and other things, less principal. In this indeed these of the last opinion, seem to differ from us, 1. That they place Faith, Repentance, and Works in one and the same kind of causality in reference to Justification. 2. That this causality, is but to account them all causes *sine quibus non*. 3. That all instrumentality is denied to Faith. 4. That Faith is not alone the condition from any respect to its immediate acting on its object Christ, but as other graces are. 5. That Christ is not our immediate Evangelick righteousness, but Faith properly taken, and that as comprehending all other duties and graces under it ; and so it is both properly taken, and improperly. 6. That therefore we may be said to be justified by works as by Faith, Faith being taken largely for all. Although where the thing is clear, and Christ is rested on in Justification, and His satisfaction acknowledged (as is in this case) there needeth be no great debate for words and terms of *condition, imputation, instrument, &c.* yet these being still used among Divines, we conceive there is no just reason to cast them, the use of them having now of a long time made them to pass in this matter, without mistake or strict binding of them to the acceptations wherein they are used in other matters ; much less is there reason to cry down the matter expressed by them : And it cannot but be sad, that such new controversies should be moved. We are persuaded, that the reflecting on many worthy men, the obscuring of the trodden path by new Questions and Objections, the confounding of Readers by proposing, as it were, of a different strain of the Covenant, from what formerly hath been preached, the giving of an open door to men to propose new draughts in all things, and that not in expressions

only, but also, (as is alleaged) in fundamental material things, &c. shall be more prejudicial to edification, nor the bringing forth of this shall be useful : for, if by this all the former Doctrine of Justification be enervated, where are we till now ? if it stand so as the followers thereof may attain Heaven : what is the use of this so full a new mould, with so much professed danger in, and dissatisfaction with, the former ? will it not be welcome to Papists, to have Protestants speaking in their terms, and homologating them in condemning the former language of the most eminent Reformers ? and though *unlearned*, or *unread Divines* be the Epithets of the opposers of this Doctrine, yet possibly experience may shew that such may most readily be the embracers of it. I say again, when the Church is overwhelmed with controversies already, it is not fit to contend for words, seeing there is some agreement in the nature of Faith, and in the necessity of works ; and we are sure where both these are, there can be no hazard : yet, if under this new model, an other matter be comprehended, than formerly hath been intended by other expressions in the writings of others, it cannot be so easily approved, lest we should condemn the generation of Gods People who have gone before us : laying by therefore prejudice and contention for words, we shall a little (so far as our scope permitteth) enquire in the truth of Faiths peculiar concurring for the application of Christs Righteousness in the Covenant of Grace, and what may be said of works. In reference to which, we would premit,

1. That this way of Covenanting, is borrowed from the practice of man with man, to set forth somewhat of a spiritual nature betwixt God and man : for which end, the similitudes of *Covenanting, Marrying, Treating, Accusing, Justifying, &c.* are borrowed, as hath been said.

2. That though all mutual Covenants have their conditions ; yet are they to be distinguished, because sometimes the Covenant is such, as entering into it intitleth to the benefits comprehended in it, as in a Marriage-covenant, entry thereunto intitleth the Wife unto the Husband, and all that is his : sometimes again, the relation must not only be entered, but all the terms thereof actually performed, before there be a right to the thing promised ; thus is the Covenant betwixt a Master and a Servant : for though the Servant be the Masters Servant at the first instant of the agreement, yet hath he not a right to the covenanted hire, till he hath performed the service and accomplished his Term : In the first of these Covenants, that which entereth one in that relation, is the condition, not so in the second.

3. Hence we may distinguish the condition of a Covenant : sometimes it is taken materially (to say so) and more largely, to wit, for all the duties that are required of one in that relation, and so a Wifes dutifulness to her Husband after Marriage, and an adopted Sons dutifulness to his Father after adoption, &c. may be called conditions of the Marriage-covenant, and of adoption : sometimes again, a condition is taken more strictly, and to say so, formally, that is, for such a thing as maketh up the relation, and intitles one to, and instates him in, the privileges Covenanted : So, formal consenting in Marriage, is the condition, and a Sons actual accepting of the offered adoption, and engaging himself to be dutiful, do estate him in the privilege of a Son, although he hath not yet actually performed all that he is engaged unto : and in this respect, the actual performing of some duties, is rather the duty of one in such a relation, than the condition required to the up-making of it.

4. There is a difference betwixt these privileges and benefits of a Covenant that flow from it as such, and to all in such a relation : thus all Wives, as such, have interest in their Husbands, all adopted Children in their Parents, what ever years they be of,

of, &c. and these benefits and privileges of a Covenant, which are but conditionally promised, even to these within such relations, and require more than being in Covenant: as although a Wife cannot but have interest in her Husband, as she is a Wife; yet can she not plead the Dowry covenanted, except she continue a faithful Wife: for, if she fail in the essentials of the covenant, she may be divorced: or, an adopted Son, cannot plead actual possession of the inheritance, though he be a Son, till the term come that is appointed by the Father, or he perform something called for in the right of adoption, which is insinuated also, *Gal. 4. 1, 2, &c.*

Now to apply this, we may some way see in what sense works may be called the condition of the Covenant of Grace, and in what sense Faith only. 1. If we take the condition largely and materially for what is called for from one in Covenant; so works may be called the condition of the Covenant, even as a Wife, or Son, their performing of conjugal and filial duties to the Husband or Parent, may be called conditions of Marriage, and adoption: yet if we consider the condition of the Covenant of Grace strictly and formally, as that which doth actually interest one in, or entitle him unto Christs Righteousness, and maketh him a Son, that is Faith properly taken, as it doth unite with Christ, *Joh. 1. 12.* because it is impossible to conceive one to believe in Christ, but he must be conceived to have title to him, as a Wife hath to her Husband, or a Son hath to his Father. And so he cannot be conceived to be a Believer, but he must be justified: because to have interest in Christ and His Righteousness, cannot be separated from Justification.

2. We say, if we look to such privileges of the Covenant of Grace as presuppose something beside being in Covenant to antecedent, as for example, entering into life, admission unto Glory, and the like, in that respect, works, and holiness may be called the condition of Salvation, because that is not actually attained without these; even as a Wifes dutifulness may be called the condition of her obtaining her Dowry, yet neither is this properly a condition of Marriage, nor the other, of Covenanting with God: but if we look to the privileges which follow the Covenant immediately and do agree to a Covenanter as such, as to be justified, adopted, &c. in that respect, not works, but Faith is to be called the condition of the Covenant and of Justification: because by Faith they are enstated into that Covenant, and so in these privileges that agree to a Covenanter as such.

Hence, 3. We may see, that when we speak of the Covenant of Grace and its condition, it is not to be compared with every covenant amongst men indifferently, as suppose, to that agreement that is betwixt a Master and a Servant, and a Husband-man and his Labourer for his hire, which presupposeth working, (and so the performing thereof must go before ere the Servant or Labourer can plead any thing upon their agreement) but it is like a Marriage-covenant or free adoption, which doth indeed infer duties to follow in the respects fore-said, and doth imply an engagement to perform them, but doth not presuppose the actual performance thereof, before any right can be pleaded by such relations, but only consenting and engaging to the same. Hence in Scripture, the Covenant of works is compared to that Covenant which is betwixt Masters and Servants, and the Husband-man and his hired Labourers, &c. and the reward is called *debt*, or hire, not because of any merit or condignity in the works; (which cannot be pleaded, even in *Adams* case) but because the performance of the duties of holiness and obedience, was necessarily presupposed to the having right to the great privileges contained in that Covenant: for though *Adam* was in Covenant with God at first; yet could he not claim life by virtue thereof, till he had continued in the obedience of the Commands, and actually performed the same, as Servants must do before they can plead for their hire. Again, the Covenant of Grace is compared to free adoption, or a mans en-

titling of a stranger to his inheritance upon condition of his receiving that, and to Marriage betwixt Man and Wife (which is frequent in Scripture; ) not because the Covenant of Grace requireth not holiness and works, but because it doth not require them actually to precede a persons title to all the privileges covenanted, and doth freely entitle him to the same, upon his entry therein, as a Wife is entitiled to what is the Husbands, upon her Marriage with him, although afterward she be to perform the duties of that relation, rather as duties called for by it, than as conditions of it. Hence we may call the Covenant of works, a servile-covenant, and the Covenant of Grace, a filial or conjugal Covenant: and therefore, although holy duties be required in both; yet there is difference, and the one is of works, and the other of Grace. Neither is it the difference, that works in the one were meritorious, and in the other not: for there is proper merit in neither, nor is the difference to be placed in this, that the one requireth works perfectly holy as the condition thereof, and the other Evangelick works not perfectly holy: because so, there were not the same law for ordering of holy duties to us which they had, nor that same absolute pattern of holiness for our copy, to wit, Gods holiness, calling us to be holy, as He is holy; nor were defects, in reference to our perfect holiness, sinful under the Covenant of Grace, if perfection were not required therein: all which are false, besides that so it were still of works: But the difference lieth in this; that our working is not to be the ground of our right to the inheritance, nor actually to precede our right as in the Covenant of Works it was necessary; but, believing and consenting only.

This difference betwixt the Covenant of Works and of Grace, may be conceived thus: Suppose a debtor being sued for his own debt, should either plead no debt, or that he had paid it, or would pay it; this is the Covenant of Works: Again, that of Grace, is as a debtor acknowledging debt, but being unable to pay, pleadeth only the Cautioners payment, and expecteth to be absolved upon that account; and not as if by a Cautioners interveining, he had all the debt forgiven him to so much, or had a new bargain given him for a penny yearly, or a pepper-corn in the place of a thousand talents; and in a word so much down, or that for gold, ure of gold should be accepted: For so, 1. some would have their penny more weighty than others, and thereby be more justified than others, or at least have a better ground to be justified upon. 2. It would be still the same kind of condition, and so the same Covenant in kind (*major & minus non variant speciem*: ) for, paying of one bushel, for an hundred chalders, still saith it is virtual-rent, although it be of Grace, that it is so little: and indeed so, the first Covenant might be called of Grace, because the good promised were so far beyond the rent required: and so it were but as a man that did at first require a talent, for that which were worth much more, and should afterward alter and require onely a shekel. 3. It cannot be so; for the sinners charge, is not that he wants his penny or pepper-corn, but that he hath broken the Law; his righteousness therefore must be such as doth meet that charge, as *Rom. 8. 34.* and so it must be such a righteousness as must stand before Justice, and be equipollent, at least, to his own fulfilling the Law, or his having satisfied the penalty thereof. 4. When the Apostle opposeth the righteousness of the Law and Gospel, he opposeth not as it were a thousand talents to a penny, or one sort of works to another, but the righteousness of Christ, or, to be found in Him, to all kind of works whatsoever, *Phil. 3. 9. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Gal. 3. &c.* and to have the righteousness of Faith, and the righteousness of Christ, and the righteousness by Faith; are ever one and the same, and are still opposed to Works.

From this also it doth appear, that Covenanting doth in order of nature precede Justification: because, by Covenanting



and being in Covenant, we come to have a right thereto, as to a promise of the Covenant, as the accepting of an offered pardon, doth go before our having a right to the following privileges, or a womans consent before her actual claim to the Husbands goods, though the one is not supposed to be without the other; even as the breach of Covenant, doth precede our being liable to condemnation by the Law. Hence also we may some way gather, that there may be some formal different consideration of the condition of Justification, from the condition of the Covenant: for, Justification being a legal judicial act, it must presuppose such a condition as may be a ground in Justice to absolve a sinner; and therefore in this, Christs satisfaction, as presented, and pleaded must be the only ground; for, it is with respect to that only, by which a sinner can be justified; and this is, *to be found in Christ, Phil. 3. 9.* Covenanting again, being a mutual deed, wherein the Lord condescendeth to make a free offer, and to admit in Covenant upon condition of receiving, the condition here must be that which entitleth to that thing offered, and entereth the person within the bond of the Covenant, which must be Faith. Hence these two acts of Faith, whereby it is defined, may be thus conceived, 1. It *receiveth* Christ, and so it entereth into, and closeth with the Covenant, and getteth instantly a title to what is contained therein. 2. It *resteth* on him; which must be judicially understood, as one resteth on a relevant defence, and therefore pleadeth it, as it is said, *Rom. 2.* that the *Jews* rested on the Law, which was to expect Justification by it, and so to rest on the righteousness thereof; in which sense we now rest by Faith on Christs Righteousness: this supposeth one to be in Him, and in the Covenant, and it locketh, as such, to Justification; and in respect of its manner of acting immediately on Christ our Righteousness, it may well be called the *instrumental cause* of our Justification. Thus, suppose a sinner to be lying under Gods curse, and suppose the Mediator to have satisfied, and a Proclamation to be made that whatsoever sinner liable to the curse for sin, will accept of Christs Righteousness; and rest thereon, he shall be justified. 1. A sinner is induced to receive that offer, which is done by consenting, and submitting to that way of obtaining righteousness; this is the closing with the Covenant, and thus Faith is the condition thereof. Then, 2. Suppose him to look to the charge that standeth against him for his former sins in Gods threatened curse; and to satisfy this he giveth in Christs satisfaction; which being offered to him for this end that he, upon the receiving thereof, may be justified; he, by Faith resting on Gods faithful Word, though Christ repelleth all these charges, by presenting that as his defence, and by the letter of the Law of Faith, which faith, *He that believeth shall not come into condemnation, but hath passed from death to life*, he is absolved: and this is Justification, even as he was formerly condemned by the Law of Works. Here the only meritorious cause of the absolution, and the righteousness upon which the sentence passeth, is, the Cautioners payment; yet so as it is judicially pleaded: in which respect, we say that Faith is instrumental. And though this pleading of it be necessary, and the Law absolveth not but when the ground is instructed; yet this pleading or instructing, is not the persons righteousness properly, or the ground of his absolution; but that which is pleaded and instructed, to wit, the Cautioners payment: which being according to Law instructed, is the ground of absolving the debtor from the charge: this is plain even in the dealing of humane Courts. And the tenor of the way of Justification, being holden forth in the Word with respect to a judicial procedour in humane Courts, as is said, it can no other way be more satisfiably cleared.

To insist a little more then, there is a two-fold peculiarity attributed to Faith, beside what is given to works and any other Grace. 1. That it is the condition of the Covenant,

properly. 2. That it hath an instrumental causality peculiar to it, in our Justification. By the first, is meant that believing in Christ, and receiving of Him, is that which enstates one into the Covenant, and giveth him right to what is promised, and doth in our having right to Gods promises, supply that room, which conditions do in mens mutual bargains; wherein when one promiseth somewhat on such a condition, the performance of that condition doth turn the conditional promise into an absolute right to him that hath performed it: and so a condition is that, upon which the title to the great promise, to wit, Gods being our God, doth depend. And Faith, getteth this name in respect of the place God hath put it into in His Covenant; and so it floweth from His extrinsick ordination. By the second, to wit, that it is called an instrumental cause, the intrinsick manner of its acting is respected: for, though it be from the Spirit with other Graces, and they be not separated; yet hath it a peculiar aptitude to look to Christ, receive Him, apprehend and eat Him, take hold of, and rest on Him, &c. which no other grace hath. For, it is in the new Creature and Inner-man some way proportionably as it is in the Outter-man: for, though there be many members of one body, yet all act not in the same manner; the hand acteth one way, and the ear another, &c. So it is in the Inner-man, there are many Graces (which are members thereof) yet have they their peculiar way of acting, whereof these mentioned are attributed to Faith: for which, often it is called the eye, the hand, and the door of the renewed soul; because by it, Christ is apprehended, received, and admitted thereunto.

We conceive this instrumentality is justly attributed to Faith, because seeing there must be an application of the righteousness of Christ, and seeing Faith doth concur, or is made use of as a mids for receiving of Him, which is the way by which His Righteousness is applied, why may it not be called instrumental in our Justification, as it is instrumental in receiving of and resting on His Righteousness, by which, and for which we are justified? And thus, Faith is not our receiving, but the mean by which we receive, as the eye is not our seeing, nor the hand our gripping of any thing; but the organs, or means, whereby we see and grip. Neither doth this give any thing to Faith, that derogate from Christ: for, it leaveth the praise and vertue to Him; but doth infer only an exercising of Faith, for attaining of that benefit, to wit, *Justification*, Justification it self being an *apotelesma* (to say so) or effect, both of Christs purchase, Gods Grace, and our believing, and doth flow from them all respectively, and doth presuppose the same. The dispute about active and passive instruments, is needless here, seeing the meaning is clear, that for attaining of Justification by Christs Righteousness, Faith doth peculiarly concur in the apprehending thereof, and resting thereon, otherwise than other Graces can be said to do. And this cannot be denied, if we consider.

1. That to be justified by Christ, and by Faith, or by the righteousness of Christ, and the righteousness of Faith, are still one in Scripture, even then when that concurrence which is allowed to Faith is denied to all other things; which faith, that Faith concurrerth peculiarly, and that so as Christ is rested on by it when it justifieth; or, that it justifieth by obtaining Justification through Him. 2. If this be truth, that the righteousness of Christ is the thing immediately presented before Gods Justice, upon which we are absolved, as is said; and also if it cannot be denied that Faith hath a peculiar aptitude, to act on Christs Righteousness, and present the same, Then it must be granted, first, that Faith must have a peculiar way of concurring to the attaining of Justification. And secondly, that this may well be called an instrumental causality in reference to that end: otherwise there is no use nor exercise of this its peculiar aptitude, which is still acknowledged. And if it please better to say, that Faith justifieth,

justifieth, or concurrerth in Justification, in respect of its peculiar aptitude to act on Christ, and to receive Him, than to say, it concurrerth instrumentally, we shall not contend, providing it be the same, upon the matter, with the ordinary doctrine concerning this instrumentality of Faith: which we may illustrate and confirm by these considerations and similitudes, 1. It is granted that the Word is the external instrument of Justification; and that must be, because it doth offer the same upon condition of believing; or, holdeth forth a righteousness by which we may be justified: So Faith must be the internal instrument, because it receiveth the same that is offered by the Word; and receiving, is no less necessary to Justification, than offering: and seeing that receiving and offering relate so to each other, and both to the end, there is reason to attribute the same kind of causality to the one, that is given to the other, respectively.

2. We are said to be justified by Faith in Christ, as the people were healed by looking to the brazen serpent, which was to typifie this, *Joh. 3. ver. 14.* Now they, by the vertue of the serpent, (considering it typically and with respect to the appointment) did receive health, yet so as that health was attained by looking thereto; in which respect, their eye or look, might be called instrumental in their health, although it was not looking simply, but to that Object with respect to the Lords appointment: even so it is here; its Christs vertue whereby we are justified, yet so as by Faith it is apprehended, and according to Gods appointment looked unto: and, thus, as *Mat. 7.* the eye is called the light of the body, because it is the organ by and through which light is brought or letten-in to it; so Faith may be called our righteousness, as it is the mean by which Christs Righteousness without us is apprehended, brought in, as it were, and admitted of, to be ours.

3. Justification is still held forth in judicial expressions, as is said: Now, as an accused party, their producing of a Law for them or a discharge, may be said to be instrumental in their own absolution, although it be only the vertue of the discharge given-in that doth procure the same; so may Faith be said instrumentally to justifie us, as it presenteth for us Christs satisfaction before the justice of God. And so it is here as in humane Courts: for, although some Advocates, it may be, plead better, and some worse; yet suppose that they all produce the same discharges, and the same Laws in favours of their Clients, they might all be called instrumental in their absolution; and the ground of their absolvitours would be equal; whereas, if their act of pleading, without respect to what is pleaded, were considered, it would not be so; even so here, though some mens faith be more strong, and others more weak, yet all apprehending the same satisfaction of Christ, there is equal sharing in Justification: which could not be, if Faith did not concur instrumentally in the use-making of Christs Righteousness, even as of the only immediate Evangelick-righteousness, as it respecteth our Justification; because, if Faith be considered in it self, and not as with the object, apprehended by it, it is not equal even in those that are justified.

4. See it in miraculous Faith: as it concurrerth for attaining of a particular benefit; so doth saving Faith for attaining of Justification: for, that there is an equal influence of both upon their respective effects, cannot be denied. Now, that miraculous Faith might be said someway to concur instrumentally for health, is clear: for it is said that some had Faith to be healed, to receive vertue from Christ, &c. which others had not, and accordingly the effects, are attributed both to their Faith and to Christs Power; therefore, it may be so here, to wit, Justification may flow from Faith as the instrumental cause, and from Christs Righteousness as the meritorious.

5. In the ordinary similitude of Marriage or solemn Covenanting, it may be seen: for, actual consenting, or the hand that writeth the name, may be said to be instrumental in the closing

of the bargain, or in attaining the priviledges that follow thereon, and the hand hath an other influence than the foot or eye, although these also be necessary, yet it is not consenting or subscribing simply, but such and such in reference to such Objects and Covenants: even as it is not the tongue its speaking truths, and the reaching forth of discharges simply that are instrumental in mens courts for attaining absolution; but it is the speaking of such pertinent truths, or producing of such suitable discharges that cometh under that name: and this is all we intend, when we say that Faith concurrerth instrumentally, even to hold out the immediate cause of our Justification, to be Christ apprehended by Faith: so that Faith and Christ are both necessary, but differently, and so also that the efficacy of all the concurrence of Faith may be from Christ the Object, from which it is not to be separated when it is said to justifie.

The other thing peculiarly attributed to Faith, is, that it is the condition of the Covenant of Grace, properly: which can be said of no other grace or work. This is to be understood as is above expressed, to wit, that Faith is that which on our side is called-for, for constituting of us Covenanters, and giving us right to the great comprehensive promise thereof, that God may be our God: and upon the performing of which, that which God hath promised in it, may be expected, as is before said.

That Faith is thus the condition peculiarly, and not Works, nor any other grace, (beside what is said afterward upon Repentance) may thus appear, 1. Because Faith only hath that peculiar aptitude of receiving Gods offer and returning of our engagement; and so, for making the bargain mutually to be closed: and Faith cannot be conceived to be exercised; but the bargain must be conceived to be closed, and that person to be in Covenant: therefore, the exercising thereof, must be peculiarly the condition. 2. If Faith be that which peculiarly riddeth marches, between the Covenant of Grace and the Covenant of Works and curse; and a Believer *eo ipso* be freed from the curse, because he is a Believer and doth rest on Christ, Then Faith must be peculiarly the condition of the Covenant of Grace; But the former cannot be denied, and is clear, *Joh. 3. 18. 36.*

3. If works concur in the same causality with Faith, Then it must either be Works before one be in Covenant, or Works thereafter; But it can be neither: not before one be in Covenant, because such Works cannot be accepted: nor secondly after, because then they could not be the condition upon which we are admitted: for so, we would be accepted before the condition be performed. If it be said, that the same reasoning will seclude Faith, because if Faith be the condition, Then it must either be Faith before we be in Covenant, or after, &c. *Ans.* It followeth not: because its Faith neither before nor after our entry, but that which enters us, that is the condition: and it cannot be conceived before nor after, being an instantaneous act, as solemn consenting in Marriage is not before nor after, as it constituteth Marriage, but instantly. Here, still observe, that when we speak of a condition, we speak of that condition whereby one is admitted within the Covenant, and not of any thing that may be implied to be performed by one admitted already to Covenant: because that must be the condition of the Covenant properly that intitleth one to the priviledges covenanted; But what entereth one into this Covenant, doth intitle him to the priviledges covenanted: Therefore it must properly be the condition; and Faith being that, is therefore alone so to be esteemed. Which we may further urge, thus, either being admitted to the Covenant, one is freed from the curse, and instated in all the priviledges of the Covenant or not; It cannot be said, not; because that were to make one a Covenanter and not a Covenanter: and one cannot be conceived to be in Covenant with God, but God is in Covenant with him actually, as a wifes marrying of a husband doth actually stare her in what is the husbands, Therefore Faith being that whereby



we are entered into Covenant, as is granted, must be properly the only condition. Again, either by Faith we are instated in the Covenant of Grace upon the very instant of believing, and so justified, or, one may be supposed to be a Believer, and not to be in the Covenant of Grace, or, to be in the Covenant of Grace, and not to be justified: both which are absurd: Therefore *Faith* must be the proper condition.

If it be said here that Justification is a continued act, Then we urge, 1. If instantly upon believing, one be justified and freed from the curse, and instated into friendship with God, Then it cannot be a continued act; But the former is true, as is said; and to say otherwise, would overturn the nature of the Covenant. 2. If Justification be a continued act, Then our being received and admitted into Covenant as to a right unto the saving blessings promised therein, must be a continued act also: for, these two must stand and fall together, to wit, to be admitted thus into Covenant, and to be justified; for, who are thus in Covenant, are justified; and who are justified, are thus in Covenant: But the last cannot be said, to wit, that the act of our being admitted, or whereby we are entered into Covenant, is a continued act: because, 1. so none living could be said to be in Covenant with God, nor account themselves to be Gods, or claim God to be theirs: which is absurd. 2. So one that is a Believer, might be said to be under the curse of the Covenant of Works; which is contrary unto that freedom pronounced unto Believers: for, if they be not under Grace, they are still under the Covenant of Works; and if under Grace, then in the Covenant of Grace. To say here, that God continueth to justify, will not remove this: because Justification must continue only, as their admitting or the act of their admission into Covenant, may continue; But it cannot be said, that they continue in being admitted into Covenant, or, that by a continued act, the Lord is still admitting them, or, that they are continuing to enter, as it inferreth non-admission, or not entry, or an imperfect admission, but as it supponeth the person to be entered and to continue so: It must therefore be so in Justification. 3. If a Believer, *eo ipso* that he is a Believer, hath a shield against all challenges, and a righteousness that can abide the trial in justice, Then cannot Justification be a continued act, because if Justification be not instantaneous and immediately perfect, it must either be upon ones not-believing in Christ, or because of some defect of the righteousness that Faith presenteth, and so Faith were not a sufficient shield; or, it must be, because the Word doth not pronounce him just upon the ground of that righteousness: which were also absurd; But the former is true, a Believer cannot be conceived to be such, but he hath a complete righteousness in Christ, and by being in Him, hath a sufficient answer to justice, upon the first instant of believing, as the whole series of the Gospel doth demonstrate, *he that believeth shall not come into condemnation, &c.* Therefore must he be upon the first instant justified: for, if it were but a perfecting, it could not be said that he had an actual perfect righteousness, but only that it were a perfecting.

Further, we may argue against Works concurring with Faith, thus, If Works be a condition of the Covenant, Then it must either be Works as begun, or as persevered into: But neither can be said: not the first; because it is granted, that persevering in holiness is no less necessary than entering thereinto: not the second, because perseverance is a mercy contained in the Covenant, and (if we may say so) promised to us upon condition of our believing and entering Covenant: it cannot therefore be the condition of our entering the Covenant. Again, many have not actual works, and yet may be saved: therefore Works cannot be the condition. If it be said, that such have resolutions of, and engagement unto, Works; That cannot solve this: because this opinion doth distinguish Works and the necessity of them from Faith properly and strictly taken; yet to them that

hold it, Faith strictly and properly taken, (even that which is justifying,) doth receive Christ as Lord, and so implieth this engagement: and therefore, if that definition of justifying Faith were true, and this ground also granted, that engaging is sufficient, Then also were Faith properly, that is, strictly taken, the condition of the Covenant, according as they understand it; and so there were no necessity to add or mention Works as distinct from it, or to press Faith to be the condition as more largely and improperly taken: and so in some respect there were no difference: for, this far none denieth but that actual engaging to Christ and to Holiness is necessary: because, it is impossible to conceive one closing with the Covenant, but he cometh, *ipso facto*, engaged who doth close; Or thus, that which is the condition to one, must be to all at age; (for of such we speak) But actual Works cannot be the condition to all; because some may be saved without them, as suppose (which is not impossible) actual consenting to the Covenant, and engaging to holiness, were the last act of a person before death, neither can they say that engaging to holiness were in this case sufficient, and that it is here intended: because, Works are spoken of as the condition, as they are distinguished from Faith, as it is taken by them to be the accepting of Christ as Lord as well as Saviour, as hath been said. See more of this on Repentance.

But beside all that is spoken, these two mainly stand in the way of our accounting works a condition of the Covenant, or of Justification, in the same kind of causality with Faith; because it obscureth the difference of the two Covenants, to wit, the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace: for so, works should be still the condition of the Covenant of Grace. Now, the Apostle doth directly oppose these, the righteousness of the Law saith on this ways, *the man that doth these things, &c.* and the righteousness of Faith is holden forth as opposit to that, and so cannot be said to consist in doing of works, *Rom. 10. 5, 6. Gal. 3. 12.* If it be said, that He excludeth legal works, or Law-righteousness, which are not alledged by this opinion; but doth not exclude Evangelick works, which may well stand with Grace. *Ans.* 1. The Apostles opposition is not made to exclude one kind of works, and take in another; but simply to exclude all which may come under the expression, *do this*. And hence Faith it self, as it is our work, hath ever been excluded in this respect. 2. If we look to works with respect to the Covenant of Works, even so works have no proper merit, nor proportion unto the things promised, of themselves, but as it is determined, and condescended to in the Covenant, and by virtue of Gods promise made thereunto: therefore it is called a Covenant of Works: not because of the merit of the works; but in respect of the formality of the condition thereof, to wit, *doing*, that is, the righteousness which we our selves do, *Tit. 3. 5.* And in this respect, to work one day and to work twenty years, or paying of a thousand talents, and one penny, doth not difference the nature of the condition of the Covenant (supposing the condition of both to be expressed in these terms) although the degree thereof be different. 3. Faith is opposed to works as the condition of the Covenant, or of Justification, not as considered in it self, but as with respect to its object Christ; and so we are thus to conceive the opposition, works inherent in us, and performed by us, are called-for in the Covenant of Works, as the righteousness thereof, and as the only ground upon which we can expect to be justified by it: again, by the Covenant of Grace, Christs Righteousness without us, received by Faith, is only admitted as a Righteousness and ground of Justification: that Faith is so to be understood, in *Rom. 10. 5, 6.* and *Gal. 3. 10, 11, 12, &c.* is evident: for, the righteousness spoken of, *Rom. 10. vers. 3, 4.* (which is the righteousness of Faith, and is opposed to our righteousness) is Christ, *the end of the Law for righteousness to all that*

all that believe, who was stumbled at by the Jews, &c. So it is also in that other place, Gal. 3. as the scope manifesteth, to wit, Faith as making use of Christ, His becoming the curse for us. And it is observable, that in both these Chapters the difference of the conditions of the Covenant of Works and of Grace, is insisted on, to plead the necessity of a righteousness without us in opposition to our own: and so Faith must be the condition of the Covenant of Grace, as it acteth or resteth on that.

The second thing that mainly dissuadeth from that opinion, is, that it doth propose something in our selves as the immediate ground of our Justification before God, under that title of being our *Evangelick righteousness*: for, if works concur in that same causality with Faith, Then our believing properly must be accounted our righteousness, and not Christs by Faith taken hold on: because these two are inconsistent, to wit, Faith and works, in a proper sense, to be our *Evangelick-righteousness*, and Christ also. For, suppose one to be charged at Gods Barr for sin, the one way Christ is represented, and the other way the mans believing and obedience. If it be said, that when we mention believing or Faith, it cannot but respect Christ. *Ans.* 1. Then there is no difference; for, we acknowledge Faith correlatively taken to be our righteousness. 2. Then also works cannot concur in that manner; for, they cannot so respect him: which is all that is intended.

If it be said, that Christ is our legal-righteousness, that is, that by Him we have satisfied the Covenant of Works, He having paid in our name; but Faith and obedience are our *Evangelick-righteousness*, that is, as He hath procured a new grant of life upon these easie terms in the Covenant of Grace, and so as by performing thereof we may come to have right to what He hath purchased in satisfying the first Covenant.

*Ans.* 1. This mis-representeth Gods way of Covenanting, who hath not appointed our paying of a smal rent (as it were a peny) to be the ground of our right unto Christs purchase; but seeing Christ became Gaurioner in our name, to pay the debt, He hath appointed the debtors claiming of, and submitting unto his payment, to be the terms upon which he shall be absolved, as was at the entry to this discourse observed, and is clear from *Philip. 3. 9.* where the *righteousness of Faith* (which is our *Evangelick-righteousness*, and opposed to works) and to be found in Christ, are one; and the one is explained by the other.

2. This way doth make a Covenant to be a mids or way for attaining of another righteousness for Justification beside Christs; and so doth make two righteousnesses in Justification, and one of them to be the mids for attaining the other, whereas the Gospel-righteousness is but one in it self, by Faith apprehended and made ours.

3. Although this may seem not to exalt works by giving them any merit; yet it is impossible to account them even to be our *Evangelick-righteousness*, or a condition of the Covenant of Grace, but there will still be a readinesse to heighten them above their own place, which derogateth to the way of Grace that is laid down by Faith in Christ: for, it is easie to exceed in reference to any thing in our selves, considered in it self; whereas when Faith is only respected, as it apprehendeth Christ, it cannot be so considered; for, it not only merits nothing, but it excludeth merit and all boasting: and therefore the Lord hath thus wisely ordered that all may be kept from boasting, even of Faith.

4. We may answer, if by legal-righteousness be understood that which may be satisfying to the Law, so Christ indeed is our legal-righteousness; yet so as by the Gospel only we have access to Him, and have a promise of being accepted through Him, without the receiving of which by Faith, He is not a legal-righteousness to any: and so He is our only *Evangelick-righteousness* also: and thus our legal-righteousness and *Evangelick*, are the same; for there is but one charge to a sin-

ner, which only can be answered by fleeing to Christ: and so He is our legal-righteousness, as the Laws charge is satisfied by Him; and He is our *Evangelick-righteousness*, as that mean of answering the Law, is to us proposed in the Gospel and for us (upon the condition foresaid) accepted by the same, without which Christ had never been our legal-righteousness, and the dividing of these two righteousnesses, doth suppose, that there may be a legal-righteousness in Christ, to such as may actually never partake thereof, (and we are afraid that some such thing may occasion this distinction) whereas Gods way in the Gospel is to provide a righteousness for such as were given to Christ, by which they may be actually justified, *Isa. 53. 11.* And if Christ be not this Gospel-righteousness, what can be it? For it is by Him we are freed from the curse of the Law which is the end wherefore this Gospel-righteousness is preached. And it is by putting on Him that even the Gospel holdeth forth Justification. But, if we consider the Law-righteousness strictly, as it requireth personal holiness, or satisfaction from the very party; so Christ is not our legal-righteousness; and in that sense it cannot be pleaded for: it must therefore follow, that He is our Gospel-righteousness, seeing no other way but by the Gospel we have access to Him. And therefore that distinction will not hold here: for, Christ is either our legal-righteousness, that is, the righteousness which the Law holdeth forth, and accepteth of it self, or our *Evangelick-righteousness*, that is, the righteousness which the Gospel holdeth forth, and which by it is accepted; But he is not the first: *Ergo*, he must be the second. And so Faith, properly taken, cannot be our *Evangelick-righteousness*, seeing Christ, and Faith properly taken, without relation to Him, cannot both be so accounted. Again, if Faith properly taken, and that largely, be our Gospel-righteousness, upon which we are justified, Then it is either Faith, including that respect to Christ, or not; But neither of these can be: for, if it respect and include Christ, then it is what we say, Faith with its object, and not Faith properly; and so not Faith in that same causality with works, which is asserted: if it respect not, nor include Christ, Then is there a righteousness and ground of Justification, wherein Christ is not comprehended, which will sound no way like a Gospel-righteousness.

If it be said, that he hath procured Faith in that large sense to be accepted. *Ans.* 1. That maketh a new Covenant of Works, as is said, 2. That is not to make Christ to be our immediate righteousness; but only to have procured that such works should be accepted, and the former Covenant mitigated, but not in its nature changed. And, so 3. If homologateth Popish Doctrine, which we hope is far from being intended by the maintainers of this opinion. 4. That overturneth the imputation of Christs Righteousness as our immediate righteousness, which is enough to make it to be stuned: for, if we lippen to such graces and duties as abstracted from Christ and without resting on Him, that is not to be found in him, but in them (for these two they are opposed, *Philip. 3. 9.*) and so they act a righteousness that will never quiet the conscience, and which the Gospel will never own as an *Evangelick-righteousness*, rest on it who will.

If it be said, Cannot Faith then, properly taken, be in any respect counted a condition, or ground of right? For *Ans.* In sum we say, 1. That Faith at most is but the condition on which Christ cometh our Righteousness, or is imputed to us for our Justification; and so Faith it self properly cannot be our righteousness. 2. We say, that when Faith is called the condition of the Covenant, or our righteousness, it doth not imply that it is properly imputed; but it sheweth to whom and upon what terms Christs Righteousness, is imputed, or; how a sinner may have access to be justified by it. 3. We say, that Faith when it is called the condition, is ever to be taken strictly; that is, as it receiveth



ceiveth Christ; and by that manner of acting, is differenced from all other graces and works. And so, 4. We say, that it cannot be conceived under this consideration, but as looking to Christs Righteousness, as the object thereof; even as we cannot conceive a consent, which constituteth a Marriage, without respect unto the party consented unto, and his offer, or declaration of his will preceeding; without which no consent could be constitutive of Marriage, or be a ground of claim to any of the goods or privileges of such a person; or, as we cannot conceive looking to the brazen Serpent, as the condition upon, or mean by which health was gotten, but with respect to the object thereof, to wit, the Serpent; and the ground and warrant preceeding, to wit, Gods appointment; without which, a look, considered simply in it self, is not so to be esteemed.

If it be yet urged further here, that if Faith properly taken, be the condition of the Covenant of Grace, and hath in that succeeded in the room that Works had in the Covenant of Works, Then Faith must be our Evangelick-righteousness, because Works then were our legal-righteousness, and that upon which our right to life did stand; But the former is truth; He that said, *do and live*, saith now, *believe and be saved*, Ergo, &c. *Ans.* 1. This will say nothing for Faith largely taken, as comprehending Works: but at the most for Faith strictly taken, as contradistinguished from them; and so there will not be that same kind of causality in both, but the contrary. 2. In this condition, Faith is never to be taken, without implying the object Christ; or without respect to its proper aptitude, for receiving of Him, and so *believe and thou shalt be saved*, implyeth still this, receive Christ and rest on His Righteousness, or submit to Christs Righteousness, and accept of Him for that end, that He may be righteousness to thee, and thou shalt be saved: it is impossible to conceive it otherwise, at least rightly. Now, when upon believing, Justification doth follow, and the person is declared just, it cannot be said that the act of believing properly is imputed, and that upon that account he is declared just; it is rather Christs Righteousness believed on, that is imputed to him; and upon that account he is declared just, which is the very terms of the Covenant of Redemption, whereby the sinners sins are imputed to Christ; whereupon He, as Cautioner, is sentenced and made *sin*, that His Righteousness may be imputed to us, and so we upon that account made righteous, and that *in him*, and not in our selves, as it is, 2 Cor. 5. 21. which implieth that even our Evangelick-righteousness, whereby we are absolved, is in Him, and not in our selves, as the sin for which He was sentenced, was in us, and not in Him. 3. There is this difference betwixt the two Covenants, as was said, The one is a servile Covenant (to say so) and must have what is engaged to in it, performed, before one have right to what is promised; and so works were in the Covenant of Works, the condition upon which life was to be expected; and without the actual performing of which, there could have been no pleading for it: but this, to wit, the Covenant of Grace, is a conjugal Covenant; therefore is not the condition thereof in all things to be squared by that. Beside, works were the very material righteousness upon which Justification was founded in the Covenant of Works; but to say of Faith, as taken in it self and without respect to Christ, that it were so the condition now, would be absurd, Christ being by the whole strain of the Gospel holden forth to be rested on before we can be justified: and yet even this would not confirm any way what is said of the joynt concurrence of Grace and works in that same kind of causality with Faith:

If it be further said, may not Faith properly taken be called the condition upon which Christs Righteousness becometh a finers, and is imputed to him? *Ans.* 1. This confirmeth what we say: for, if Faith be the condition upon which Christ becometh our Righteousness, Then it is Christ who is our

Righteousness, and not Faith strictly and properly taken, much lesse largely, as comprehending all other Graces: for if it were our righteousness properly, there needed no imputation of Christs after our believing, except it be said (as some Papists say) that it is imputed to make up our defects, and to make our holiness acceptable; and so it were our Faith and Works that should be justified by the imputation of Christs Righteousness, and not our persons: which is contrary to Scripture. 2. This is, upon the matter, the same with what we said, as is hinted: for suppose a debtor to be pursued, he pleadeth absolution, because his Cautioner hath payed, and he produceth the discharge given to him, wherein that is acknowledged; his pleading so and producing of that discharge, may be someway called the ground that giveth him right in Law to have that payment of the Cautioners imputed to him, yet his absolution floweth from the complex business, not of his pleading simply, but of the cautioners paying, his pleading of that payment, and the Laws accepting of that defence and imputing of it to him; and so from all these together his absolution floweth: just so it is here, our Justification floweth from Christs satisfaction, being accepted and rested on by us, and imputed to us by God. And therefore, thirdly, though Faith properly be the condition upon which Christs Righteousness is imputed to us) I had rather call it the mean by which it is apprehended) yet it followeth not, that therefore Faith properly taken, is our righteousness, and as such, is imputed to us, and accounted so, seeing still this presupposeth the imputation of Christs Righteousness in order of nature to intervene betwixt our believing and our Justification: and therefore that His Righteousness imputed, must be properly our righteousness, seeing we upon account, and considered as such, (to wit, as having Christs Righteousness imputed to us) are justified; and upon that Righteousness imputed, Justification is immediately grounded. Yet, Fourthly, All this doth say nothing for Faith largely taken, as comprehending all Gospel-duties: for, though Faith strictly taken be necessary for having right to Christs Righteousness, or having it imputed to us; yet are not actual works so, by any means; but through the imputation of Christs righteousness, we are first accepted, & then bring forth these good works; which sheweth that they do not go before that imputation of Christs Righteousness, or our Justification, but that rather they follow thereupon. For, if we cannot do good works, till we be Sanctified, and if none be Sanctified, but such as are Justified, and these two cannot be separated; no not for an instant of time (for it cannot be said that a man is Sanctified, but not yet Justified, *aut contra*) Then it will follow, that a man is Justified before he hath actual works, (it is of such we debate, and not of habitual seminal holiness) for he may be, and is Sanctified before he can have them, much more ere he persevere in them. And so consequently, actual good works cannot concur to Justification as Faith doth, or be the condition thereof; But the former is true and clear: Therefore so is the latter also: which is the thing that was in Question. Lastly, we say, if Faith properly, and largely taken according to their meaning, (or yet strictly) be imputed to us for Righteousness, Then either Christs Righteousness is not imputed, but our Faith only, or Christs Righteousness and our Faith properly taken also; But neither can be said: not the first, to wit, that the Righteousness of Christ is not imputed to us, but Faith only, That I suppose is not intended: neither can the latter be said, *viz* that Faith is imputed to us for Righteousness and Christ also: for then, Christ is either imputed for our total righteousness, and so Faith cometh not in, or, as a partial righteousness, and that is absurd. Again, either His Righteousness is imputed to us before we believe, (and so before our Faith can be imputed) which is false: for, that would make Christs Righteousness to be ours before we were in Covenant internally; Or, it is imputed to us after we believe,

and

and so after our own Faith is imputed to us and accepted for Righteousness; But that cannot be; for then we would be righteous, before the imputation of Christs Righteousness; which is absurd: or, lastly, both must be imputed together; which also cannot be: for, if both be imputed together properly, Then both in the same sense or kind of causality, or in diverse senses: the first cannot be said; for that would make both meritorious, which is disclaimed: If the last be said, then it must be so as the one is imputed to us for our legal righteousness, to wit, Christs satisfaction, and the other as our Evangelick, to wit, Faith; But, 1. That is the thing already spoken to, and doth divide Christ and our Gospel-righteousness; Or, 2. It turneth to this, that Christ is the thing that satisfieth Justice, but Faith is the ground or mean by which we come to have title to that satisfaction; which is the thing that is granted, and we suppose is the thing that by some is intended: and is in sum, that, to which others give the name of the instrumental cause. And if so, there needeth not be contending for words: for, both are acknowledged, to wit, that by Christs Righteousness, only as the meritorious cause, we are justified, and that there is no right to plead Justification by that, except by Faith, or upon condition of believing, by which, actual right to Christ, and by Him Justification, is obtained.

Further, It cannot be said, that they are imputed jointly: for then, 1. Either that imputation must be an instantaneous act, at the first believing, or exercise of Faith; and so Justification must be an instantaneous act also; which they will not grant: because the Faith that is imputed (according to them) is Faith and the exercise of holiness persevered in; for which cause, Justification to them is a continued act. 2. It must be instantaneous, but not imputed, till Faith and Holiness be persevered into; and by this, neither Christs Righteousness, nor Faith is imputed to the person, nor can he be accounted in friendship with God, or to be in Christ, or righteous, till his life be closed: for, he cannot be accounted so, till he be justified; and he is not justified, till these be imputed to him for Righteousness: Or, 3. that imputation must be a continued act, from the first closing with Christ till the end. But how can that be? For, 1. It is hard to conceive the act of the imputation of our faith to be continued, but more hard to conceive the imputation of Christs Righteousness to be a continuing act: for, Christs Righteousness, at the first, is perfect, and it is to be imputed to the Believer; if therefore one may be called a Believer, It is to be imputed to him instantly. 2. Imputation being a judicial word and act, it supponeth an instant sentencing of such a righteousness to belong to such a person, as it were, and to be accepted for him: for, if he hath not perfect right, there is no legal imputation, (to say so,) but if it be perfect, then it is an instantaneous act. 3. If it be continued, then it is continued as if at first it were not a perfect imputation or perfectly

imputed; But that were to say that it is not imputation: if it be continued as perfect, then it is supposed to be instantaneous, and past; and what was said for Justification, doth hold here. Indeed if the meaning be that the Gospel doth continue to impute righteousness, even after faith, till the believer be in Heaven, and to account such a sinner just by virtue thereof, That is truth; But that speaketh the changed state of a sinner, upon the account of an imputation and justification already: so indeed, the word of the Gospel continueth still to pronounce Believers justified upon that account, and that imputation in its virtue never ceaseth; But it cannot be said that the Word doth continue to justify, as justifying denoteth the changing of a persons state, from a state of enmity to a state of friendship: even as an absolved Rebel, or Debtor, once pronounced free by virtue of such a persons intercession, or Cautioners payment, doth continue to be declared free, that is, his absolution continueth in force; but properly, the act of freedom, or absolving, doth not continue, but is instantaneous upon the production of of such rights.

To shut up this, we may illustrate the way of Justification, which is more clearly expressed in the Gospel under these expressions, *believe and thou shalt be saved*, by comparing it with the more obscure and typical expressions used under the Law: for it is certain the substance is the same; and what is our legal-righteousness, was theirs; and what was their evangelick-righteousness, is ours also. Now, the terms or expressions of the Old Testament run thus, *Lev. 1. vers. 3, 4, &c. When a man sinneth, he shall bring his offering, &c. and he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering, and it shall be accepted for him, to make an atonement for him, &c.* In which words there is an express condescending upon the Lords side, to propose something as a righteousness for a sinner, which was to be accepted for him; yet, I suppose, no Christian will say, that it was the external sacrifice itself, that was to be accepted for such, nor that it was the act of the Faith of the offer alone, that was so accepted: for then there needed no sacrifice, but it behoved to be the thing typified by that sacrifice, to wit, the Sacrifice of Christ, looked to, apprehended and pleaded by the Faith of the offerer, that was so accepted. Yet, the external sacrifices in the Old, are as expressly said to be accepted for a sinners Justification, or as an atonement for him, as Faith is said to be accounted for righteousness in the New: and as it cannot be said, that by virtue of Christs satisfaction, or the Covenant with him, it was procured that such performances and sacrifices should be accepted of themselves, as the persons immediate evangelick-righteousness, though their ceremonial Law was their Gospel; So it cannot be said, that there is any such bargain concerning Faith in the New Testament: but that Christ apprehended by Faith, is the Righteousness both under the Old and New Testament: which is the thing we intend.

### Concerning Repentance.

Repentance is much called for in these Epistles, and that with peremptory certification of coming wrath, if the same prevent it not, as we may see, *Chap. 2. vers. 5.* In the Epistle to these of *Ephesus*, who look like a people real in the Work of God, though under some decay: It is also called for from *Pergamos*, *vers. 16.* Yea *Jezabel* hath a door of mercy opened to her, upon supposition of Repentance, *vers. 21, 22.* This also is required of *Sardis*, *Chap. 3. vers. 3.* and of *Laodicea*, *vers. 21.* For clearing of which places, and other truths concerning Repentance, It may be enquired, once for all; 1. If Repentance be simply necessary for preventing of wrath and obtaining of the pardon of sin? 2. In what respect it is necessary, and how it doth concur thereto? 3. If to a Believers recovery after

his sin, the exercise of Repentance be necessary? 4. If so, what kind of Repentance?

For understanding of all, we would permit, that Repentance may fall under a threefold consideration, 1. It may be considered as somewhat previous in time to the exercise of Faith and Pardon of sin. This is properly legal-sorrow, and is a common work of the Spirit, which may be in one, whose sins will never be pardoned: it is therefore not of itself gracious, although the Lord may sometimes make use thereof, for sinners humbling and wakening before his conversion. This is not the Repentance that is pressed here.

2. It may be considered, as it doth not only follow pardon, but also the intimation thereof; so it is a melting of heart, and



and a self-loathing that floweth from felt love, as the promise of the Covenant is, *Ezek. 16. 63.* and *26. 31.* This is the melting of heart, spoken of in that woman, *Luke 7. who loved much, because much was forgiven her, vers. 47.* Neither is this that which is principally intended here.

3. We may consider Repentance as a work of sanctifying Grace, arising from the sense of by-past sin, and hope of future mercy, whereby the heart is both affected with indignation in respect of what is past, and warmed with desire and love in respect of what it expecteth, and so differeth from the first, which ariseth from apprehended future wrath; and from the second, which floweth from felt-received mercy. This Repentance goeth alongst with Faith and the exercise thereof, for the attaining of the hoped-for remission, with a through impression of the freeness thereof, in respect of the persons felt sinfulness. That is the sorrow after a godly manner, which is spoken of, *2 Cor. 7. 11.* and it is that which is principally intended here, and in other places where Repentance is required in order to remission of sin.

In Answer then to the first Question, We say, that Repentance, understood in the last sense, is simply necessary for the obtaining of the pardon of sin, so that without it no unreconciled sinner can expect peace with God: which we thus make out, 1. from several places of Scripture; and first, by these places where the command of Repentance is prefixed to the obtaining of pardon, and preventing of wrath; and that by way of certification, that if it be not, remission is not to be expected, as *Acts 3. 19.* Repent that your sins may be blotted out: which doth imply, that without this, the blotting out of sin is not to be expected; otherwise the proposing of the out of sin could be no great motive to press the exercise thereof; which is the Apostles scope: as also, *Acts 2. 38.* *Acts 8. 22.* and so in all other places, where Repentance is pressed as a means for attaining of that end.

2. We may add these places where the connexion between Repentance and Pardon is more peremptorily enforced, as *Luke 13. 2, 3.* Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish: than which nothing can be more clear; and *Prov. 28. 13.* He that covereth sin, shall not prosper: but he that confesseth and forsaketh (which is, upon the matter, all one with Repentance) shall find mercy.

3. It is confirmed from such places as ground the cause of peoples ruine upon their not repenting, as in *Levit. 26.* *Amos 4.* *Ezek. 18.* *Revel. 16.* &c. and many such places, is clear, where this; they repented not, is given as the cause of Gods continued quarrel against them.

All these considerations we will find in these Epistles, where the Lord doth not onely require the exercise of Repentance by command; but doth threaten judgement, except Repentance prevent, *Chap. 2. vers. 5, 16,* and *22.* and it is particularly marked to be the ground of His continued controversy with *Jezabel*, *vers. 21.* that she did not repent, and so *Chap. 3. 21.*

In the second place, this may be made out, if we consider the promises of Gods Covenant, in which remission of sins is subjoynted to the exercise of Repentance, as necessarily antecedent; so that without it there is no access to any promise of pardon. See, first, *Levit. 26. 40, 41, 42.* If they shall confess their iniquity, then will I remember my Covenant: which doth presuppose confession, and the exercise of Repentance, and the humbling of the heart, to go before the application of the Covenant. And lest it should be thought a legal-covenant, it is expressly said to be the Covenant with *Isaac* and *Abraham*, which cannot be denied to be of Grace. The like also may be gathered from the *1 King. 8. 47.* where *Solomon* expressly Covenanteth for pardon on these terms: and *2 Chron. 7. 13.* the Lord doth expressly assent to these articles. Yet this is a Covenant of Grace, being a Covenant for obtaining of pardon through Faith in Christ Jesus, whereof praying toward the

Temple and Mercy-seat, was a type: and it is expressly said to be, upon the matter, Gods Covenant with *David*: which cannot be denied to be the same Covenant of Grace with that comprehended in the Gospel, seeing the mercies sworn to the Fathers *Abraham* and *David*, are the same mercies that are now conferred upon Believers. And although there were some peculiar promises made to *Abraham* and *David* in respect of their own seed, and some other things; yet these peculiar promises were not the grounds of their own Justification, much less are they to be pleaded by any other for that end. Now, the Covenants end, as it holdeth forth remission, and its essential promises, must be common to all. It may be confirmed also from *1 John 1. 9.* If we confess our sins, God is faithful to pardon, &c. which supponeth that there is no engagement (to speak so) upon Gods faithfulness to pardon any sinner but him who repenteth.

In the third and last place, the necessity of Repentance may be confirmed, if we consider the qualifications of such persons as God pronounceth pardon unto in His Word; it is not to sinners, as sinners simply, but to lost sinners, (that is, lost in their own eyes) such as are weary and loadened, such as are broken in heart, grieved, wounded, &c. as appeareth from *Isai. 61. 1, 2.* and else where. All which qualifications shew the necessity of Repentance in a person, that may expect pardon. It is true, both Repentance and Remission are Christs gifts; but in this method, he giveth first Repentance, and then Remission, *Acts 5. 31.* And though he came to call sinners; yet doth he call them to Repentance, as that which maketh way for their getting good of Him.

From what is said, we may gather these two conclusions in opposition to the Doctrine of the *Antinomians*. The first is, That Repentance is no legal duty unbecoming for a Minister of the Gospel to Preach, or a Professor thereof to exercise with respect to the obtaining of pardon; and that it is not onely to be looked after, and to be pressed upon the account of the faith of sins being already pardoned. Secondly, It followeth from this, That remission of sin is no immanent or eternal act of God; but is a transient act, and that after the committing of the sin: for, if remission presuppose Repentance, it must also presuppose the sin to be committed, because Repentance doth presuppose that: and therefore it cannot be from Eternity. This opinion of sins being remitted from Eternity, doth stand and fall with the former, to wit; of the needlessness of Repentance for the obtaining of pardon: and therefore the overturning of the one, is the overturning of both. It is true, Gods purpose and decree of pardoning sin, is Eternal, as all His decrees are; But this actual pardoning of a sinner is no more from Eternity, than his creating or glorifying men, yea, in the same decree, he hath proposed the giving both of Repentance and Pardon, in the method laid down.

If it be said, that thus it will infer, 1. That there is no difference betwixt the Elect in respect of their estate before Repentance, and reprobates. And, 2. That it will infer some change to be in God, if He should behold sin in a person immediately before his Repentance, and not thereafter: both which, say they, are absurd. For answer to the first, we say, That if we consider an Elect person before conversion with respect to himself, and to the Law and Covenant of Works, without respect to Gods purpose, There is indeed no difference betwixt him and a reprobate; because, they are both as impatient unbelievers without the Covenant, without hope, and dead in sins, and trespasses, as is spoken even of the Elect, *Ephes. 2. 1, 2.* and *12.* and both of them are under the curse, seeing the Law doth indifferently curse all that have sinned, and are not by Faith in Christ. This is no absurdity; but contributeth exceedingly to the humbling of the Elect, and to the advancement of

of Grace. Again, If we consider the Lords purpose, there is a great difference, although as it is His purpose, it doth make no real change, except in the manner, time, and method in which he hath purposed it to be.

To the second we answer, that this doth not infer any change in Gods will, as if he now willed that which He would not before, more than to say, His will changeth when He glorifieth a person which He did not actually glorifie before, although He purposed indeed to do the same. It only proveth, that there is a change wrought upon the creature, who is glorified, by that same unchangeable will of God, which did, before the world, decree that in due time to be done: so it is here, in time He pardoneth, and maketh a change upon the creatures state, by that same will, and in the same manner as it was decreed. And this is no absurdity: because according to the rule, although God cannot change His will; yet He may will a change upon the creature; *etsi Deus non possit mutare voluntatem, potest tamen velle mutationem.*

There is more difficulty in answering the second Question, to wit, in what respects Repentance is necessary for obtaining the pardon of sin, and how it doth contribute to the obtaining thereof? As *Antinomians* give too little to it, on the one hand; so on the other, *Papists*, *Socinians*, and *Arminians* give too much. To guard therefore against those extremities, we say, against *Papists*, 1. That Repentance is not necessary as having any efficiency in it for the expelling of sin, by the in-bringing of a contrary gracious quality; as light doth expel darkness: For, remission of sins being to them the infusing of habitual Grace, and Repentance being a part of that inherent Holiness, In this respect they account Repentance necessary as a part of our formal Righteousness, by which sin is expelled, and the person constituted formally and inherently just: This indeed is an absurd overturning of the nature of true remission of sins, (which consisteth in Gods not imputing the same to us, or in His blotting them out) and altereth the whole strain of the Gospel.

2. We say, that Repentance doth not concur for the obtaining of the pardon of sin, as any material cause disposing the soul for the receiving of a gracious quality, for the expelling of sin; or, as being a pre-requisite matter to Gods working thereof in the soul. This we reject as absurd, upon the grounds fore said: for, though we acknowledge the soul of man, yea, the whole man to be the object whom God doth pardon; yet pardon, being a judicial act of His Grace, it can admit of no material cause.

3. Neither doth Repentance concur for the obtaining of pardon by way of merit, as if there were any congruity or condignity therein for obtaining thereof. This marreth the freedom of forgiveness, and encroacheth upon Christ Jesus His Offices, who is the alone immediate and meritorious cause of our being accepted and obtaining pardon.

4. Repentance doth not concur by way of satisfaction, as if the grief that doth accompany it upon our sensitive part within, were some satisfaction or recompence for the offence committed against God, and so had influence (as it were) to procure the easier terms from Him: in which respect they do place whippings, fastings, and such like, as satisfactions without, concurring for the remission of sin, at least, in its temporal punishment, as this doth within. This also we abhor, as derogatory to the alone satisfaction of our Lord Jesus, who by His once offering up of Himself hath perfected for ever them that believe, *Heb. 10. 14.*

5. Neither do we establish a Sacrament of penance, thereby instrumentally to communicate remission of sins (that is, habitual grace, as they understand it) by the power of the keys, in the Priests absolution, and that *ex opere operato*: this we disclaim, as being without any warrant in the Word, and and certainly cannot be imagined to be the thing called-for in the forecited Scriptures.

These ways are indeed pleaded-for by the Papists, who thereby do overturn the whole nature of Repentance, remission of sins, and the Covenant of Grace; and do enervate the consolation of poor penitents, (as may be further spoken-to from *chap. 9.*) but are disclaimed by us in Doctrine, and ought to be adverted to in practice, least the Doctrine of the necessity of Repentance be abused beyond that which is warrantable. We have for that cause disclaimed these assertions explicitly; as also, that thereby many, and almost all the *Antinomian* arguments and calumnies may be answered and removed, who have nothing ryser in their mouths and writings than this, that the pressing of the absolute necessity of Repentance is a point of Popery, a marring of the freedom of Grace, a crying up of inherent holiness, and such like: which are most unjust, as is said.

The *Socinians* and *Arminians*, do also acknowledge the necessity of Repentance; and although they give it no proper causal influence upon the remission of sins; yet do they miscarry in reference thereto in these respects, which we also disclaim:

1. Albeit Repentance be necessary; yet it is not necessary as any pre-requisite qualification to be performed by us in the strength of our own free will. This were indeed to make nature a sharer in our conversion, and to give it occasion of boasting, contrary to the scope of the Gospel, which doth exclude that. It is indeed we who repent formally, and our will and soul is the subject wherein it is wrought; and to say, Christ is formally the penitent, we abhor; yet it is by the strength of Grace working in us to will and to do, *Phil. 2. 13.* that we do repent, and that our wills are enabled to elicit acts of true Repentance: so that if we will consider these acts of Repentance, as they are acts simply, and are *in Categoria actionis*, they are our acts, and performed by our wills, as the next formal cause producing them. But if we consider them as such, that is, as gracious, and acts of saving Repentance *in Categoria qualitatis*, they are not from us; but do proceed from the grace of God alone, sweetly and powerfully determining the will in the bringing forth of them.

2. We say, Repentance hath no moving efficacy in it, so as to be an external impulsive cause, or, *ratio movens*, why God should forgive sins, as Repentance, and resenting of wrongs committed, have influence to move provoked men to forgive, and pity those that have offended them. This seemeth plausible-like to men, who cast the way of grace in a mould of humane and natural reason; and inadvertently in practice may be fallen into by many, who, though they disclaim a meritoriousness in their Repentance, yet are ready to conclude some prevailing perwasive efficacy to be in it: which appeareth by this, that when they are satisfied with their own Repentance, they more confidently expect pardon; and when their sensibleness in Repentance drieth up, they are ready to question it, as if there were some weight in their Repentance of it self to prevail with God, and perswade him (as it were) to pity. This, I say, is not to be admitted: because Gods will, being absolutely pure, simple and sovereign, is not capable of any *motus* from any cause without it self: and forgiveness being an act simply of Grace, and ordered alone in all its manner of proceeding by His sovereignty, there can no reason moving Him thereto be imagined, although He want not reason in His acting, as they say, *Datur ratio voluntatis divina, sed non ejusdem movens*: This also would propose the most high and holy One, as some way having passions to be wrought upon, like unto us; and would obscure exceedingly the freedom and sovereignty of Grace, which hath always its rise in his own bosom: Therefore it is asserted by Divines in this case, that properly it is not our Repentance that maketh our sins, either actually to be remitted, or yet to be remissible, but Gods Grace alone: for if Grace had not ordered the connexion between Repentance and Remission, upon grounds laid down by it self, no sinners could have



expected pardon, nor would their sins have been remissible even upon supposition of their Repentance, more than if there had not been Repentance, if such a supposition may be made.

3. We say, that Repentance doth not concur for the obtaining of remission of sins, as it is a piece of our own new obedience, and of the condition of the Covenant of Grace, and so now to be imputed to us with Faith and the other Graces for Righteousness, in stead of the perfect holiness which was the condition of the Covenant of Works; as if now, God in the pardoning of penitent sinners, their sin should not respect Christs imputed Righteousness as the immediate cause making them acceptable to Him, but the very acts themselves of Faith, Repentance, &c. and to the first Covenant of Works will be mans performing of all holy duties according to the Commands perfectly; which Covenant being now broken, and man made unable by sin, to perform the condition thereof, this opinion supponeth Christs satisfaction to have procured (which yet *Soci-nians* deny, as any procuring cause of) a new Covenant upon these terms, that sinners who are short of perfect Holiness, and yet do believe and repent of their sins, should be accepted; and these acts of Believing, Repentance, &c. should be accounted to them, by verue of that Covenant, as if their obedience had been perfect. This way is not sufferable, because it shutteth out Christs imputed Righteousness from being the next immediate and meritorious cause of our Justification; and continueth the Covenant to be in substance a Covenant of Works for its form: although it place no condignity of merit in these works; yet by this, it is still some work of ours that is the ground of our defence before Gods Justice; and so cannot be admitted; for even Faith it self, in this case, cometh not in to be considered, but as it uniteth with its object, to wit, Christ Jesus in the promise, as hath been said.

These ways which are more gross, being disowned (to that there is neither ground to charge us with *Papery* nor *Arminianism* for our asserting the necessity of Repentance) we come now to show positively in what respect it is necessary.

1. We say, Repentance is necessary not only by necessity of precept, but also of ends, *necessitate & precepti & medii*, that is, not only as a duty laid on by God; but as a mean appointed by Him for attaining that end: to wit, remission of sins: in which respect, a penitent, or repenting sinner, may be said to be using the means how pardon is attained, and to be in the way of obtaining it, which cannot be said of a sinner that repenteth not. For although Repentance, as absolutely considered in it self, doth not make a penitent any nearer unto remission; yet it being considered in respect of Gods contrivance, & of the order which He hath laid down, and the promise which He hath subjoyned to it, it may well be called a way and mean for attaining to pardon.

2. Beside this, there is a kind of congruity and suitableness in this order which God hath laid down; by subjoyning the promise of pardon to it, thus it is more suitable that a penitent sinner should have pardon, than an impenitent; because he is a more congruous object (to speak so) for grace to shew it self gracious upon, than if there were a continuing in security. Neither hath this congruity any causality or merit in it; but onely doth shew Gods wise contrivance in appointing a means suitable to His end, which is the glorifying of His Grace; and the making of Himself to be precious to the sinner.

3. Repentance concurrerh in the obtaining of pardon, by qualifying the sinner in reference to the promise, wherein pardon is proposed: which is not to be understood, as if this qualification were a thing previous to a saving work of Gods Grace, or, as if it did dispose the subject for receiving of any inherent quality: Or, lastly, as if there were any merit in it to commend the person so qualified unto God, for the attaining of pardon: these things we have already rejected; But it may be said to qualify a person in these two respects, 1. That it putteth one within

the reach of the promise, which speaketh pardon to none but to such who are so qualified: and thus it qualifyeth the person merely with respect to the promise, and the qualification contained in it: and to a true penitent sinner, may be said to be qualified for remission, and may take hold of the promises that make offer of the same, which no other, not so qualified, can do: because the promises are peculiarly holden forth to such who are so qualified. 2. It qualifyeth the sinner in reference to the promise, as it doth dispose him to accept the offered salvation freely, and to rest upon Christ alone for that end. Thus it qualifyeth for obtaining of pardon, as felt poverty qualifyeth a proud beggar to receive willingly an offered almes, and to be thankful for it: neither is the almes the less free, that it requirerh one sensible of poverty to receive it: but it is rather the more free, and acknowledged to be so, when it is conferred: even so it is here.

There is one thing more questioned, even among Orthodox Divines, that is, if Repentance may be accounted a condition of the Covenant with Faith; and if in that respect, it be necessary, and do concur for the obtaining of pardon? For answer, (That we may not digress long in this) we shall lay down some assertions, after we have premitted this distinction. A condition may be taken more largely for any thing required as an antecedent for obtaining the thing promised: in this sense, there may be many conditions. 2. It may be taken more strictly and properly, for that upon which the closing of the Covenant dependeth, and that which, as such, cannot be considered but as implying the closing thereof. 3. A condition may be taken, as it looketh to some consequent following the close, and is virtually implied therein. As for instance, in Marriage there are several things necessary, as the hearing of the proposal, the believing historically the truth of the thing heard, an esteem of it, and a desire to have it, with a loathness to offend the party proposing it: These are supposed to be requisite and necessary in one that is called to Marry, that she should forget her kindred and her fathers house, and cleave to the husband, and so forth. Yet none of these resolutions, or qualifications, are properly the condition of the Marriage-covenant; but the parties consent to accept the offered match, upon the terms proposed. The actual and positive solemn declaration whereof, in the approved way, is that which formally closeth the match, and entitleth the party so accepting to the husband, which none of these former qualifications did: after which, there followeth the performance of Marriage-duties; the obligation whereof was contained in the Marriage-contract. Yet cannot they be accounted properly the condition of the Marriage-covenant: because the performing of them doth pre-suppose the Marriage: just so is it here, there are some things that in a large sense are pre-requisite to the closing of the Covenant, or at least do go alongst with it as conviction of sin, Repentance, historical faith, desire of peace and union with God, &c. something, to wit, Faith doth actually close therewith; some things follow thereon, as duties to be performed by one in Covenant, as the duties of holiness and bringing forth the fruits of it, &c.

Now to come to our assertions, the first of them is this. If we take a condition largely, Repentance may be called a condition of the Covenant, as sensible poverty may be called a condition upon which almes is given, or, as the forsaking of the fathers house and cleaving to the husband, may be called the condition of the Marriage, as conviction may be called a condition of the Covenant, because it is supposed.

Yet secondly, we assert, That if we take a condition strictly & properly, Repentance cannot be called the condition of the Covenant, but Faith only, in that proper strict sense: because,

1. In the opposition of the two Covenants of Works and Grace, Faith is put in opposition to Works, and Repentance is not so formally opposed, *Rom. 10. v. 5, 6, &c.* And Faith in that place

place is to be understood properly as distinguished from other Graces of Repentance, Love, &c. because it is that Faith which doth peculiarly justify in opposition to Works, and as contra-distinguished from them.

2. Because that which is the condition of the Covenant of Grace, and doth succeed to the condition of the Covenant of Works, must be something laying hold on an external object without a man, to wit, Christs Righteousness: for the performing of the condition must be the ground of our expecting the thing promised; which only Christs Righteousness, laid hold on, can be reckoned to be. But Repentance cannot act thus upon Christs Righteousness by taking hold of it without a mans self, but it acteth upon an object within himself, to wit, upon his own sins; in turning from them to God, which yet it doth but imperfectly; and so cannot be opposed in reckoning with God, in place of the condition of the Covenant of Works: Therefore Repentance cannot be properly the condition of the Covenant of Grace, nor yet any thing that is merely inherent in us, and doth not so act upon Christ, whereof more was said formerly.

If it be said, that Faith is an inherent Grace no less than Repentance: The answer is easy, to wit, That Faith is not considered merely as an inherent Grace, when it is called the condition of the Covenant, but as it uniteth to Christ, and closeth with Him offered in the Gospel: even as in a Marriage consent, willingness and contentedness to Marry such a man, although it be an act of the will; yet as it is an act of the will, it is not considered as the condition of the Marriage-knot, but as it relateth to a proposed match, and is the accepting thereof. And hence, though love, respect to the party and other things be necessary to Marriage, and in a large sense may be called conditions thereof; yet are they not properly the condition which constituteth a person married to another, because they act not so as to receive and close with the proposed offer.

3. Repentance is not that which formally constituteth one a Covenantant: because one is not a Covenantant as he is a penitent, but as he is a Believer: for, the immediate satisfying ground of ones claim to the Covenant, is, because by Faith he hath received the offer; and therefore as such he hath right to the Covenant: it will not so follow from Repentance, to wit, upon this formal consideration; he exerciseth Repentance: therefore upon that formal consideration he is a Covenantant. It is true, it is an evidence of the former, because a penitent is a Covenantant, but his being a penitent is not the *ratio formalis* of his being a Covenantant; only it supponeth him to have by Faith closed with the Covenant. For we may consider repenting as abstracted from formal closing and covenanting, although we cannot separate the one from the other: but we cannot consider believing as acting on its object, but we must consider it as closing with the Covenant. Therefore Repentance cannot properly be the condition of the Covenant as Faith is:

4. That which is properly the condition, doth of it self, upon its fulfilling, give one a title to the things promised, and doth become the ground of a right unto them: It was so upon supposition of fulfilling the Covenant of Works, and it is so in all Covenants: But Repentance cannot do so: Therefore, &c. If it be said, although Repentance cannot so do it alone; yet Faith and it may do so together. And seeing by his opinion Faith is admitted with Repentance joyntly to be the condition of the Covenant, That argument cannot hold: because it is not said that Repentance is the only condition. *Answer.* The argument doth shut out Repentance from being accounted any part of the proper condition, thus, If Repentance cannot joyntly with believing in Christ be put in as a piece of our righteousness before Gods Throne, Then it can be no part of the proper condition; because the performing of the proper condition hath a ground in all Covenants to plead for the performance of what is promised, and the absolving of the party fulfilling the same, upon that

account: But the former cannot be said of Repentance; for, our Repentance can no way be alledged before Gods Justice as our righteousness. *Ergo, &c.* This may be made out, thus, If Repentance may be tabled as any part of our righteousness, Then it must be either as a Grace inherent in us, or as it acteth on Christs Righteousness without us; But neither can be said: not the first; because no inherent Grace is to be admitted in that respect, in whole or in part: not the second; because Repentance hath no such faculty of acting on Christs righteousness, as hath been said: and therefore cannot be said to concur so at all.

5. If receiving of Christs offer be the formal and proper condition of the Covenant alone, Then Repentance cannot be any part of the proper condition thereof; because it is not by Repentance, but by Faith that we do receive Him; But the former is true: receiving and closing with Christ by Faith, is the onely proper condition thereof. Therefore, &c. Beside what is said in the former discourse, this appeareth, thus, If receiving of Christ by Faith doth only formally entitle one to the Covenant, and all the promises thereof as such, Then it must be formally the proper condition; because that entitling to the thing promised, is the great character of a proper condition: But Faith onely is such: And therefore is the righteousness of this Covenant called peculiarly the *righteousness of Faith*, and not of Repentance, Love, &c. because Faith giveth a title to the righteousness Covenanted, which Repentance doth not. And because in the performing of the mercies Covenanted in the way of Grace, greater weight is laid on Faith, than on Repentance, or any other Grace. Again, that Faith is the proper condition, may appear, thus, because it is properly and expressly proposed as the condition. *Acts 8.* It is said to the Eunuch, *If thou believest thou may be baptized;* and *Acts 16.* to the Jaylor, when the question is expressly proposed, *What shal I do to be saved? Believe* (saith Paul) *and thou shal be saved.* So answered the Lord, *Job. 6. 28, 29.* *This is the work of God to believe, &c.* Neither can it in reason be objected, that as these places do propose Faith; so other places do propose Repentance as the condition, as *Acts 2. 38, &c.* For it cannot be denied, but Faith doth otherwise act on Christs Righteousness and the Covenant than Repentance can do; and therefore Faith is acknowledged to be principal: whereas, if that objection hold, Repentance and Works would be equalled with it. We therefore take it thus, where Repentance is proposed, there the whole way of turning to God more generally is proposed: But where Faith is proposed, that which more properly and peculiarly doth state our Interest in God, is proposed, as the consideration of the formal actings of these Graces will clear, and is wholly denied by none.

6. That must be the proper condition of the Covenant which doth entitle God to the person, as the person to God: For the Covenant being mutual, that which giveth men a right to God, and bringeth them within the compass of the Covenant, must constitute them to be Gods, and give him as it were a right to them by vertue thereof; But it is not Repentance that giveth God formally a Title to a soul, but it is receiving of Him by Faith, and submitting to His Righteousness. Therefore it must not be Repentance, but Faith, that is the proper condition. This is seen in a Marriage-covenant. For that is the womans condition, upon her part, which doth entitle her to her husband, as well as her husband to her. Now, it is not Repentance that giveth up one to Christ as His, as is clear, but Faith, &c. that delivereth up a person to him, and is that whereby one taketh him and consenteth to be His. And therefore it is Faith that doth entitle Christ to be His. *Ergo, &c.*

7. If all these works were the condition of the Covenant, then entry into the Covenant were a successive work, and not instantaneous; but this is absurd. Therefore not these, but Faith alone is the condition of the Covenant; for if in an hour; yea, in an instant at a Sermon, a man may have his



heart opened to receive Christ, and by that have a right to Baptism as a Covenanters. Then it is not successive; But the former is truth. *Ergo*.

8. If these Works were the condition, and not Faith only, Then upon supposition of Faith could not the Sacrament of Baptism be administered; But it behaved to have antecedent to it, not only the purpose, but the actual performing of these works; because Baptizing supponeth the accepting of the Covenant: what therefore entitleth one in profession must, when it is really done, be the condition of the inward covenanting.

9. If Faith be the proper condition, Then Repentance cannot be so; because Faith is not a condition of the Covenant merely as it is a Grace, but as it is peculiarly qualified in its manner of acting. Now, Repentance not being qualified with that manner of acting, cannot be a part of the proper condition, 1. Because if so, then were graces of different actions admitted to concur in the same capacity and manner of acting, contrary to their natures. 2. If so, then not only Repentance but every Grace, and all good Works, might be accounted parts of the proper condition of the Covenant, as well as Repentance and Faith, if there were no peculiarities in Faiths acting respected in this. And though this may be counted no absurdity by some; yet to such as plead only to joyn Repentance with Faith, it may have weight: And to others we propose these considerations. First, That the evidence of light doth constrain the acknowledging of Faith to be eminently the condition beyond all; yea, that it may be called the only condition of the new Covenant, 1. Because it is the principal condition, and the other but less principal. 2. Because all the rest are reducible to it, as necessary antecedents or means, &c. (so Mr. Baxter, *Apho. Theol.* 62.) and the formal and essential acts of this Faith are acknowledged to be *subjection, acceptance, consent, cordial Covenanting, and self-resigning*. Now, if Faith be the principal condition, and that as acting so, in which respects no other Grace can act, Then certainly Faith hath a peculiar property here, and that not as a Grace simply, but in respect of the formality of its acting: which doth confirm all that is said. And thus, Faith is not the principal condition, as being only so in degree (like a chief City amongst many Cities) but in respect of a different manner of acting, and an excellency (to say so) that is in it in that respect, Such acts being peculiar and proper to it, which are the proper characters of a proper condition: and if so, seeing all other things mentioned are acknowledged as necessary antecedents or means, or implied duties, &c. why should there be a contending about words, and a new controversy stated for the nature of a condition when the Church is almost suffocated with controversies already? Secondly, If Works be the condition equally with Faith, Then our being accounted Covenanters, must follow actual Holiness, and till then none are indeed Covenanters: which is absurd, as was formerly said: for so, none could otherways have right to any thing in the Covenant. If it be said, These are feminally and in purpose at the entry, That will not answer it: because it's not the purpose, but the actual performing of the condition, that giveth right. Beside; if a purpose satisfy for a condition in these, Then either feminal Faith, or a purpose thereof is to be admitted also; which is absurd: or, if actual Faith be required, and but other conditions in purpose, Then it is actual Faith, and not these that is the proper condition of the Covenant. Thirdly, If these Graces and good Works be the condition of the Covenant, Then it is either in respect of their particular acts, or of persevering in them; But neither can be said. *Ergo*, &c. Not particular acts; because the Scripture hangeth the prize on overcoming, continuing to the end, &c. and not on acts. Nor can it be perseverance; because so, no benefit of the Covenant could be pleaded till it were ended: for, it is the intire condition, and not a part thereof that giveth title and right: But it is absurd, that none should have right to any benefit

before perseverance be ended, whereas perseverance, is a privilege that a Covenanter may claim. These may indeed be called some way conditions of obtaining the possession of the great benefit in the Covenant, but not of the Covenant it self; and are duties implied to be performed by a Covenanter, but cannot be conditions upon which he is admitted. And though somewhat to this purpose, was said formerly, yet the matter being so like, there is no hazard nor prejudice from this co-incidency.

*Affert.* 3. Although, in strict speaking, Repentance be not the proper condition of the Covenant; yet as to the naming of it a condition, or not, we conceive there is no great ground of debate: and if the matter be well guarded, the expression may be suffered; Otherways it is no strife about words. We conceive that the guarding of the matter, doth require, 1. That these Errors both of *Papists*, *Arminians*, and *Socinians*, formerly mentioned, be carefully eschewed, and that, by giving it the name of a condition, we do not fasten upon it any of these senses, especially the last, to which it is most liable.

2. This would be guarded, that Repentance be not shuffled in as a piece of our righteousness, or that which we make an immediate defence and shelter against the Justice of God: of which somewhat hath been formerly spoken.

3. This would be guarded, that Repentance be not accounted to be a condition in that same capacity and formality of acting as Faith is: because that would either confound the nature of these Graces, or wrong the way of the Gospel, wherein ever something peculiarly is attributed to Faith.

We come now to the third thing proposed, that is, if Repentance be necessary to a justified person for obtaining the pardon of sins committed after Justification, as well as before it, To which we Answer shortly, That the Scripture doth hold forth the same necessity in this case, as in the former. 1. Because there is the same order in the Commands that are given, and the promises that are made to them for obtaining pardon, as may be gathered from the Epistle to these in *Ephesus*, who may well be supposed to be Believers; and the ground, is general, in this Epistle to *Laodicea*, vers. 19. *whom I love, I rebuke and chasten, (saith the Lord) be zealous therefore and repent*: where Repentance is put in as a necessary mids for removing of Gods rebuke and quarrel, even from them whom He loveth. 2. The promises made to Believers, run in the same terms, 1 *Joh. 1.9.* *If we confess, God is faithful to pardon, &c.* where John keepeth the same method in reference to pardon, even when he wrote to Believers; and putteth himself in the roll. 3. Experience doth also confirm the same, as we may gather from *David*, *Psal. 32. 3, 4, &c.* *while I kept silence, my bones waxed old, &c. but I confessed unto thee, and thou forgavest me, &c.* In which place, this connexion and order is clear. Neither can it be said that *David* onely obtained the sense of pardon, 1. Because he himself doth account it pardon, and such happiness as doth proceed from the not imputation of sin. 2. Because, *Rom. 4.* the Apostle maketh use of this experience for the describing and confirming of Justification it self: which could not have been, if the place had spoke onely of the declaration thereof. And it cannot be otherwise, seeing the Law curseth every sinner, and the Gospel absolveth none but the penitent. It may be gathered also from *Nathans* word to *David*, 2 *Sam. 12.* declaring his sin to be pardoned after his acknowledging, which supposeth it not to have been so before that time: So also it may be gathered from the Lords dealing with *Jobs* friends, *Job 42.* with whom the Lord was angry, till they humbled themselves before God.

Neither can it be well objected here, That this may hazard the perseverance of the Saints, supposing that some of them may die without actual Repentance. For, 1. The Doctrine and nature of the Covenant betwixt God and Believers, doth include a two-fold impossibility, 1. That a sinful Believer

Believer can be pardoned without repentance, because the Lord hath appointed that order and method, and that wisely and graciously for the clearing of Believers from sin, for the humbling of them under it, and for directing of them how to be freed from it. And there is need of this, lest Believers being in a great part corrupt, should abuse Gods goodnesse.

The other is, that it is impossible for a justified person to die under sin without Repentance. And these two do not crosse one other: because the first is conditional; no justified person, having sin, if he repent not, can be pardoned: the other is absolute, to wit, no justified person can die under sin without Repentance: because they are kept by the power of God to Salvation, 1. Pet. 1. 8. And he who hath ordered the end, hath also in His Covenant ordered the mids necessary thereunto; so that they cannot but be again renewed unto Repentance. And it is in this, as betwixt election and effectual calling: for, no elect can be justified, till he be effectually called, so that if it were possible he should die at age before effectual calling, he could not be saved; yet it is simply impossible that any of them can die before effectual calling: so must it be here in respect of the renewing of Faith and Repentance.

It will be difficult to clear the fourth thing, to wit, what kind of Repentance (to speak so) is to be accounted simply necessary for obtaining the pardon of sin; because sometimes persons are not soon satisfied with the degree and kind of their Repentance: sometimes again, even Believers after soul slips are taken away without any sensible-like work of Repentance for the same. It may be questioned therefore upon the former suppositions, what is to be accounted Repentance? In answering to which, we shall first lay down some advertisements concerning Repentance, in the general; and then some distinctions of the same: from which the answer may be easily formed.

1. It is no peremptory degree of Repentance that is required, as simply necessary; It is sincere Repentance, having its native fruits, that is to be acquiesced in.

This sincerity of Repentance, is not to be judged only by the sorrow, horror, or grief that sometimes do accompany it, nor by the continuance thereof in its exercise; because Repentance may be true where little of these are: and it may be unsound where much of these is sensible, and that for a long times continuance, as experience doth confirm.

3. The sincerity and sufficiency of Repentance therefore, is to be tried mainly by the rise and effects thereof, &c. to wit, if respect to Gods honour affect the heart with the sense of its sin; and if it so affect, as sin becometh hateful, the person is humbled in himself, and brought to esteem of, and put a price upon, Gods Grace in Christ Jesus, so as to be in love with the same. This is properly *turning*, and doth comprehend the essentials of Repentance, what ever the degree of sorrow be.

These advertisements being laid down, we would now consider some distinctions of that Repentance that is necessary for pardon, especially in the Regenerate, as they are, or may be held forth in several expressions, by several persons.

*Distin.* 1. Repentance is either expresse and explicit, that is, when men both know such things to be sins, and themselves to be guilty of them, and do expressly acknowledge the same, and are affected with them; or, it is implicite, when men are generally affected for sin, although they be guilty of some things which they do not know to be sins, or, know not themselves to be guilty of the same. Of such sort may be the Polygamie of several Godly men: which is not altogether to be justified, at least, in respect of the extent thereof, in all, as to be so ordinary, to have so many Wives, to have them of such consanguinity, as Sisters, &c. Of such sort may be the errors which were maintained by many of the Godly in the Primitive times concerning meats, dayes, &c. which not being known by them to be sins, cannot be said explicite to have been repented of; yet that

they were impotent, it cannot be said. Under this also come in many matters of fact, which are forgotten, not observed, nor considered, as appeareth from *Psalm 19: 1* *Lord purge me from secret sins*. The last is to be accounted necessary to pardon, to wit, that they be penitent; but the first, to wit, that Repentance should be explicite with respect to every particular sin they are guilty of; this is not to be esteemed necessary in this absolute sense.

*Distin.* 2. Repentance is either actual, and that for particular sins, as when *Peter* repented of his denial, and *David* of his murder, &c. or, it is interpretative and virtual, as when a man is heartily affected for such and such a particular sin, and for the corrupt inclination and body of death that is in him, that is the seed of all, although there be some particular sin, which is either not known to him to be such, or is not actually in his mind; and so cannot be particularly and actually repented of: yet it may be said, that virtually he doth repent of the same: Because, 1. He doth repent of all sin in the root and seed thereof; and he may well be constructed to repent of, and to loath all the branches and members, when he is seriously humbled under the impression of the indwelling root and body of death. 2. Because he repenteth of the sins which are known to him, upon the account which is common to all sin, as sin, to wit, its dis-conformity to the Law of God: and therefore may well be constructed to repent virtually of all the sins he is guilty of; because that which is the essence and form (to speak so) of every sin, is detested by him as it is such: and (as it is said) *à quatenus ad omne valet consequentia*. This last is only pleaded for, as simply necessary, as the former instances do clear.

*Dist.* 3. Repentance may either be considered intensively, that is, as it doth affect the heart with a high degree of sorrow; or, it may be considered appretiative, that is, when sin is seen and acknowledged: and though there be no such intense sorrow, or so sensibly affecting the heart; yet sin is accounted a thing to be sorrowed for, & the heart is weighted that its sorrow is not deeper; and the person reckoneth it self so far under the body of death, as it cannot be answerable to its light in the exercise of Repentance. This last may have the native effects of Repentance, to wit, the humbling of the sinner, &c. without the former; therefore, at least, the former is not simply necessary. Mark here, that the use of this distinction is exceedingly different from the use which Papists make thereof, to wit, for supporting of a ruinous inherent righteousness, whereof Repentance is a part: and because they cannot find it in that intensiveness as may stand before justice; therefore they coin a sort of appretiative Repentance, which to them is a desire and endeavour in the uttermost degree possible to attain the former, that so they may underprop the other that is like to ruine; or put this in its room: but there is no such thing here; for, as we understand the appretiative repentance, it is to commend Grace and humble us the more: but as they do, it is to support Works; and can never give a conscience quietnesse, because it is still defective, even in what it might attain, whereof we possibly shall say somewhat elsewhere.

*Dist.* 4. Repentance may be considered as prevalent and taking up the whole man: and this it carrieth with it a sutablenesse in a mans affections and actions, as may be seen in *David*, *Psalm 51*. or, it may be considered as in the renewed part, which may be lamenting sin, and its own condition in respect of the tyrannie of the body of death, even while it is kept in bondage. It cannot be denied but in this respect *Paul* was exercising Repentance, *Rom. 7*. when he allowed not that which he did, and was prevailed over by the Law of his members; and no question he was looked on as a penitent upon that account: and therefore, not the first of these, but the last, is to be accounted simply necessary. This also may be seen in *Ephraims bemoaning* himself. *Jer. 31. 18*.



*Dist. 3.* We may also consider Repentance, ~~as it is known~~ to be such before men, or to the person himself by a palpable recovery: such was the Repentance of David, Peter, &c.: or, we may consider it, as it is known to be such to God only, without such sensible evidences to others, or, it may be, any sensible change to the person it self; yet may there be real Repentance indeed before God. This may be said of Solomon, of whose Repentance and pardon we cannot doubt, as also of Aſa's; yet hath the Lord left them in His Word under such a cloud, that their change hath not been, at least, very discernable: for, we find these high places, that were builded by Solomon, continuing unremoved for many generations thereafter: which doth certainly shew, that his Repentance hath not had so palpable a change before men, as that of Manasses had. And this is ordered by the Lord in deep wisdom; partly, for a chastisement of their back-sliding; partly, to terrifie others from the way of declining; and partly, to make all men sober and sparing to passe sentences upon the state of others, however their condition may look before men, when they are removed: for, the Lord will have the sovereign and infallible decision of their state, to wit, whether they be Penitents and Believers or nor, left unto himself alone, who hath an insensible way of begetting Faith and Repentance, and also of recovering and renewing the same, when he pleaseth.

If it be further moved, how, at the first exercising of Repentance and Faith, a man can be said to be justified, that is, accepted as righteous and pardoned of all his sins; seeing his sins after Justification are not pardoned until they be committed and repented of?

*Ans.* Both are true: for future sins are not actually pardoned till they be committed and repented of: yet is the man a justified person, and in a justified state, having a ground laid in his Justification for obtaining the pardon of these sins that follow, so that they shall not overturn his former absolution: for, Gods Covenant hath both fully in it, yet in due way to be applied. And it is, as if a company of rebels were subdued, and by treaty they are pardoned, changed from that state of enemies to be natural subjects, and privileged with their privileges; so that

if they fall in after faults (as subjects may fall in,) yet are they never again counted enemies; nor is their first freedom cancelled; but they are dealt with as native subjects falling into such offences; and have privileges that strangers have not, nor can plead in the same faults: one of which privileges may be supposed to be, that they shall not be rigidly fallen upon, although their guilt deserve death; but that they shall have means used to reclaim them, (and these, such as cannot but be effectual) and that upon recovery, they shall be pardoned these faults, and be preserved from the deserved punishments. It is so by the treaty of Grace and Justification, the believing sinner is translated from the state of an enemy, to the condition of a friend, this is unalterable, he cannot afterward but be a friend: yet, because a friend may be ingrate, and fail to his benefactor; therefore by that treaty, it is provided, that there should be a way to forgiveness by virtue of that Covenant, yet so, as there should be a new exercise of Repentance and Faith, for the commending of the way of Grace: and so a sinning Believer, is a sinner, but not in the state of sin; nor is an enemy, as he was before Justification, even as a faulty subject is guilty, yet is no enemy, nor rebel, nor can be punished by death, when he becometh penitent, although he deserveth it: because the Law of Grace is such to the subjects of that Kingdom, that their pleading of their former treaty, and betaking themselves to the terms thereof, is ever to be accepted as a righteousness for them in reference to any particular sin following Justification, as well as what preceded. And this no stranger to God can plead, who hath no such ground for his recovery from sin, or, that God will give him Repentance for it, much lesse that he will certainly pardon him. Yea, it differeth from a penitents case at first conversion; because a Covenanter may expect pardon by virtue of that same Covenant in which he is engaged, and to which he hath already right, and he hath *jus ad rem*: another cannot do so, but must consider the Covenant as offered only, and so expect pardon; not because God is actually engaged to give it to him, as in the others case; but because God doth offer to accept of him on these terms, and then to pardon him.

### Some general Observations concerning Preaching, and especially Application.

HAVING now gone through these Epistles, we may see how wisely and seriously our Lord Jesus, the Prince of Pastors, (who hath the tongue of the Learned given unto Him) doth from Heaven speak to the condition of these Churches, to whom they are directed: wherein we may have an excellent copy, according to which, Ministers ought to carry themselves in discharging of their Trust. We conceive therefore, it will not be impertinent to shut up these Epistles with some general directions concerning the way of Ministers making application to Hearers, which can hardly any where else, more clearly, fully, and together be gathered: and although every thing may not be particularly pitched upon, which is necessary in Preaching (that not being the Spirits intent in the place;) yet we are sure, that as His prosecuting of the respective cases of these Churches, is very comprehensive; so it cannot be but most worthy of imitation.

1. In general we see, that Ministers in their application, ought to conform themselves to the case of the Church and persons to whom they Preach; to erroneous people (or such as are in danger of error) more convincingly; to the secure, more sharply; to the afflicted and tender, more comfortably, &c. as may be seen in our Lords dealing with these Churches.

2. Ministers ought in their Doctrine to apply themselves to all sorts of persons, to wit, to Rulers, and People, to hypocrites, and openly profane, yea, to the good, and these that have

most tenderness; reproving all, convincing all, as there shall be cause: So that neither hopelesse of profiting some that seem to be desperate, nor preposterous affection to these who are tender & affectionate, ought to marr this manner of dealing. And thus we see our Lord Jesus doth threaten profane and grosse erroneous *Fezibel* upon the one hand, and backsliden, though Godly *Ephesus*, upon the other. Sometimes, it is more difficult freely and faithfully to reprove one that is Godly, or to withstand one *Peter*, than to threaten or contend with many that are profane: and yet both are necessary and profitable for edification.

3. This universal application to all sorts, would yet notwithstanding be managed with spiritual wisdom and prudence, so that every one may get their own allowance. Hence the Lord doth so threaten the secure and stubborn, that yet he excepteth these who were not defiled; and so comforteth the faithful, as the profane may not have a ground to take the same consolation with them. This is a main qualification of a Minister of the Gospel, rightly to divide the word of Truth, and not to follow all applications promiscuously and in heap together in any Auditory, without such discriminating expressions as may guard against confusion therein: especially as to these four, 1. That a tender soul may be so strengthened and confirmed, as a secure person be not more hardened; and that a presumptuous hypocrite, be so stricken at, as an exercised soul be not wounded.

2. When

2. When both the good and profane are in one fault, the one is otherwise to be reprov'd and restor'd than the other; and we see *Ephesus* is more tenderly dealt with, than *Laodicea*, according to the rule, *Gal. 6. 1.* 3. The faults of Believers would be so reprov'd, as with whose their state, and what is commendable in their practice, be not condemn'd and reject'd also: but that there be intermix'd commendations, or approbations of what is approveable, lest Godliness suffer, when the fault of a Godly person is reprov'd; and least the sentence go beyond the Masters intent, which is not to condemn the person, but to reprove the fault, as the Lord doth tenderly distinguish these in the case of *Ephesus* and *Pergamos*. 4. Times and cases would be distinguished also: and where outward affliction, or inward exercise have seized on a person or people, reproofs would be more sparing and gentle, than when there is outward prosperity and a readinesse to settle in a formal discharge of duties, as by comparing the Lords dealing with the Churches of *Ephesus*, *Smyrna*, and *Philadelphia*, and His dealing with *Sardis* and *Laodicea*, is clear.

4. This application would be pathetick, pungent and weighty, according to the matter pressed, so as it may have weight upon the Consciences of Hearers. It is a main piece of Ministerial dexterity to make a plain obvious ordinary reproof weighty in application, so as the matter may look serious like to the Hearers, and they be convinced that he is in earnest: and for this cause, his convictions, reproofs, directions, &c. would not rest in the general: for, the Lord is particular in all these Epistles. 1. In mentioning the sins that he reproveth. 2. In giving the evidences of them, to shew that he beateh not the air; and the more to bear in the conviction in the application: for, as general truths will need their proofs; so will particular applications, least the conscience shift the challenge. 3. He ripens up the heart, by chopping at inward sins, to wit, *falling from the first love*; *thou sayest I am rich, &c. thou hast a name that thou livest but art dead, &c.* It is a main part of searching Doctrine, to repel the answers that a heart may have within against the power of Godliness, though they be never expressed; and this is a main property of the Word, to be a discernor of thoughts, *Heb. 4.* And thus *John* did with his Hearers, *Mat. 3. 9.* *Think not to say within your selves, &c.* 4. The Lord Himself is in His expressions serious, that the Conscience and inner man may be carried alongst in giving heed to the words spoken to the ear, and that the outward man, may see the scope of the Word Preached, *2 Corin. 10. 4, 5, &c.*

5. Application would rather be squared to the edification of the Hearer than simply and only regulated by the Doctrine that it riseth from: for, sometimes there may be seemingly flourishing applications, when a Minister speaketh in the prosecuting of some truth, and in the pressing of some point with respect to the matter that he is handling, which is in it self good; and yet it may be little useful to the Hearers spoken unto, as not being pertinent to them. Our Lord here conformeth His application to these He writteth unto: so such truths ought to be insisted on, and pressed, as besit the Hearers.

6. The matter insisted upon, is diverse; sometimes reproof, sometimes exhortation, sometimes it is in reference to corrupt Doctrine, sometimes to the inward spiritual case, &c. which sheweth, that a Minister would not be addicted to, nor always dwell upon one thing; but would sometimes convince gain-sayers and clear truths, sometimes Preach practical things, and that of diverse sorts; because Faith and Practice is the end of Preaching; and clearnesse in, and acquaintance with truth, maketh Hearers solide, and well grounded in both; beside, that in numerous Auditories there are varieties of conditions which call for variety of edifying Doctrine.

7. In his striking at errors, we find, 1. That he doth not insist on questions of more remote concernment, such as

many were in these times; but on these that are in their nature more grosse, and in their consequence more hurtful. 2. The errors that he toucheth, were such as were presently troubling the Church, and these Churches in particular to whom he writteth. Old buried errors are not fit matter for ordinary Preaching. 3. He pursueth these errors at most grosse and abominable things, to make them odious and abominable unto his people; and for that end, compareth the promoters thereof to *Balaam* and *Jezabel*. It was regrated by holy Mr. *Greenham*, That some by their trifling way of confuting error, made it but ridiculous, whereas they ought by earnestnesse and gravity, to have made it hateful.

8. His practical matter is near the power of Godliness, to wit, marking the Spiritual declining of the sincere, pressing the exercise of Repentance, and the performing of holy duties upon all; and, with all, most searchingly and convincingly striking at hypocrisie, presumption and self-confidence, as in the Epistles to *Sardis* and *Laodicea*: thereby shewing what Doctrine especially Ministers should insist on in Congregations: and if we look to our Lords practice while in the flesh, we will not find Him more frequent on any subject than this, to wit, that the way to heaven is narrow, that many were first that shall be last, that hypocrisie should be guarded against, &c. as His parables of the sower, foolish Virgins, Marriage-feast, and many other instances, do demonstrate.

9. The Lord doth not insist upon the most high sublime and obscure things, either in His Doctrines, Reproofes, or Directions, such as are the more obscure Questions of the Schools, or the most Spiritual experiences of grown Christians, although this last, being well timed, hath its use; but He presseth the most plain, obvious and uncontrovertible duties of Religion, to wit, Repentance, Self-examination, Faith, Zeal, &c. It is a great and main part; yea, the very life of application, to stir up to the practice of acknowledged duties, and to restrain from confessed sins: for, as mainly the life of Religion lieth in the practice of these; so the most powerful preaching, is in the pressing of them. We may to this purpose see also in that Sermon of our Lords, which is recorded by *Matth.* in his 5, 6, and 7. Chapters, how familiarly He condescendeth to expound the Law, to direct in the exercise of Prayer and Fasting and other duties, both in the first and second Table; wherein certainly He is still pressing Spiritual service.

10. In all these, the Lord so followeth the application as He may imprint it on the conscience, and leave some profitable fruit by it: and, in a word, He convinceth, exhorteth, reproveth, offereth counsels, &c. as they may be edified by it, and every word may gain its native end. Therefore we see when He convinceth of, and reproveth for sin, He doth first point at the particular sins wherewith He chargeth them. Secondly, He doth aggrage these sins by shewing the guiltinesse and sinfulness of them. Thirdly, He proposeth weighty and sad threatnings to scare them: and the more secure and self confident they be, (as in the Epistle to *Laodicea*) he doth the more sharply ripe up their inside, and the more emphatically and significantly express his abhorrence thereof, and their hazard thereby. Again, when He exhorteth to duty, He doth, 1. make the duty plain, that it may be known what he calleth for. 2. He giveth some helps for furthering of them in the performance thereof, to wit, the remembring of what is past, or their examining of their own way, watchfulness and advertencie for the time to come, and such like; which are both in themselves principal duties and great helps in all the practice of holiness. 3. He presseth these exhortations to duties with motives, which comprehend both the prejudice of neglecting them, and the advantage that cometh by the performing of them. Again, when He proposeth the offer of the Gospel, and inviteth to believe (as to the Church of *Laodicea*) He doth, 1. open their sinful



dangerous and hypocritical case, and battereth down the ignorant self-confidence which they had in their own formal profession. And, 2. He proposeth the right remedie, to wit, Himself and His benefits, His imputed Righteousnesse which can only cover their nakednesse, &c. 3. He cleareth the terms upon which that *gold* and *white raiment* is obtained, under these expressions of *buying, opening, hearkening, &c.* And, 4. He doth most sweetly, and yet most vehemently presse it: partly, by condescending friendly to counsel and intreat; partly, by making His offer large, free, and particular to any man that will open, &c. and partly by urging His call weightily and rousingly with a *behold, I stand*; as if after He had made the offer and had knocked, He were now taking instrument, in the consciences of hearers; thereby, as with a nail to fasten His invitation upon them; and so, pressing their closing therewith, or otherwise assuring that He will leave this instrument upon record against them.

11. We find, whatever the case of the people be that He speaketh unto, the up shot and icope of His message, is, ever to perswade a closing of the treaty between Him and them. Therefore, when He chargeth with sin, He leaveth not there, but commendeth unto them Repentance; and giveth a promise of welcoming of them upon that condition: when He quarrelleth for hypocrite and deadnesse in profession, He proposeth Christ, and adviseth to accept of Him: when He exhorteth to duty, as to Repentance and Zeal; yet, even then doth He propose Christs Righteousnesse, as the only cure and cover of their nakednesse (as in the last Epistle is clear;) whereby we may see, 1. what a Ministers scope should be, and whereache should aim in conviction, reproof, &c. and where he should leave his hearers, to wit, at Christs feet, who is the end of the Law for Righteousnesse. And it is not unprofitable, even explicitly to make that the use and close of all. 2. We may see, that the Law and Gospel should be both preached and pressed together, and that so, as the one seem not to encroach upon the other. And especially this would ever be clear, that the weight of our peace with God doth not ly upon duties when they are pressed, but upon the righteousness of Christ. As it is a great practice in a Christian, to give the Law and Gospel their due place in practice; so is it a main qualification of a Gospel-Minister, rightly to ride marches between the Law and the Gospel. This maketh so much insisting in the Epistles to the *Romans, Galatians, &c.* to keep Justification by Faith in Christ, clear and distinct from Works and Duties, even when they were much pressed and practised. And it is no lesse dangerous to Professors to rest on Duties, than to omit them; and therefore the necessity of being denied to them in the point of Justification, and of resting upon Christ alone, is to be cleared and pressed by Preachers, as a most necessary and fundamental thing.

12. For this cause, the nature of the Covenant, and Justification by Christ, are especially to be cleared, where a Church is formal, that is, free both of errors in Doctrine, and grosse scandals in practice, and resting there: wherefore we see, that in the Epistle to the Church of *Laodicea* (which is charged with neither of these) our Lord doth most especially insist on this: for, the beating down of error, and banishing of grosse profanity, are but, as it were, the taking in the outworks of the devils kingdom; therefore when these are gained, the main batteries are to be directed against self-righteousnesse, hypocrisy, presumption, self confidence, &c. that the soul may be brought to receive Christ in earnest, and zealously and seriously to study holinesse, without which a formal profession will be but as a stone of stumbling.

13. We see that our Lord Jesus putteth together an intire mould of the whole Doctrine and practice of Godlinesse, giving, as at one view, a sight of our natural sinfulness and hazard, and of the way how these may be remedied; so that when He pro-

poseth any quarrel, He leaveth not off till He propose also the remedy, presse dutie, and close with some encouraging conditional promise. This is also profitable for a mixt Auditory (especially at solemn times, and other occasions, wherein people are usually most serious and attentive) to give together a view of the Doctrine of the Gospel; so that when a conviction is pressed, and the Hearer is made somewhat hot, he may have some present discovery of the way which he ought to take; and that he may either be informed, or, at least, be put in mind of as much of the Gospel as may be a ground of his peace, if he be improven, though he should never afterward hear any more. This we see was the Apostles way in their occasional Sermons in the History of the *Acts*, wherein the sum of the Gospel is usually comprehended; and the Lord himself doth so with *Nicodemus, Job. 3.* and though there be difference now, in some respect, where the Gospel is ordinarily and daily Preached, so that this is not so necessary to be done alwayes explicitly, as if they had never heard the Gospel before: and although it becometh a Minister to draw his Doctrine from some particular Text; yet considering, that the generality of Hearers, are very ignorant of the series of the Gospel, and others are weak and inadvertent even in things which they someway know; and considering withal, that a Minister may have occasion by way of Reason, Use, Mean, Motive, Question, or otherwayes, to hint a view of the Gospel almost from any material Doctrine, and that without any just imputation of impertinencie, we conceive, that generally and usually its expedient to follow this manner; especially on the Lords Dayes, which are most fit for Gospel-doctrines (people being then for that end set apart and sequestered from their ordinary busineses) and when the bodie of the most ignorant people are gathered together. This way certainly by Gods blessing would look more like a mean of conversion (and hath in experience been ordinarily found so) than when now one point, and then another, are distinctly handled; and so the one is either forgotten by the most part, before they hear the other, or at least is not so warm to them, although they have the knowledge thereof. And these things being the Text of the Bible (to say so) and the great subject and earand which Ministers have to insist on, It ought not to be accounted grievous because of mens nauseating and loathing of them from the frequent mentioning of them, seeing to the People they are profitable and safe, as *Philip. 3. 1, 2.* and even that loathing would, in the manner of proposing the same things, be guarded against; that itching and curious ears get not occasion of contemning the precious Gospel, and thus but few would be able to discern that it is so.

14. In these Epistles, there is a Divine Ramp, bearing forth an efficacy in the manner of pressing all these things. And we will see, 1. Authority in what is spoken, 2. Evident plainnesse and clearnesse, 3. Seriousnesse and vehement earnestnesse in pressing what He presseth. Indifferency and coldnesse in speaking of weighty things, is most unsuitable in a Minister. 4. There is love and affectionate tendernesse to them to whom He speaketh; yea, even in the sharpest rebukes, He prudently intimateth the same, that He be not mistaken. Ministers have gained much, when Hearers are convinced that they seek their good in the sharpest words: and their way would be such, as, without affection, may evince that in the Consciencs of Hearers. 5. There is much (O how much!) wisdom in His premitting commendations, in His differencing the guilty from the innocent, in His choosing such threatnings and motives as may gain most upon these He dealeth with respectively, and not using the same to all.

15. His stile of speaking, is sweet and Heavenly, yet plain and familiar: It hath a sweet statinesse in it, and is far from trivial expressions, which may make the matter spoken weightlesse; yet is it plain and equable; because now He is speaking to edification in practical things, Therefore doth He abstain from

from the dark manner of expressions, which afterward He useth in the following Prophecy. But. 1. His plainest words are most significant, massie, and apposite. 2. The titles that are given to Himself, are stately; weighty expressions and titles of God, and of Jesus Christ, become the preaching of the Gospel well; and are useful to keep up the reverend estimation which Hearers ought to have of Him. It is suitable usually to name Him so, as at the mentioning of Him, it may appear that the heart is affected with the excellency that is in Him; and that the man doth not speak of that glorious Majesty, as of other subjects: even as Ambassadors should give honourable titles to their Masters. 3. The simillitudes are pertinent and grave, serving more to illustrate the matter and make it plain, than to please the ear and tickle the understanding, as the comparing of Christs Righteousnesse to gold and raiment, and the closing of the Covenant, or believing in Him, to *buying, opening, &c.* which manner is useful to people; and that way of speaking in Parables, was much used by the Lord, who also interpreted them to His Disciples, to make the significancie thereof the more to appear. 4. He doth ever expresse Heaven by some notable borrowed and various expression, thereby to commend the same: partly, because it is a great advantage to have Hearers in love with it; partly, because more proper expressions will not always so clearly, fully, and to the life, sure, and hold forth the thing that is to be spoken of: whence it cometh to passe, that sometimes there is an allowance granted to use borrowed expressions in such cases.

16. We will find an orderly method in all the Epistles. There is indeed no affected curiosity, neither are there any Philosophick terms made use of; yet, method being useful in itself, to clear the matter, and to help Hearers to conceive and retain what is said (and so, subservient to edification) our Lord doth also condescend to that way. Therefore, in general, we see all these Epistles have, 1. A Preface, 2. A Narration, 3. A Conclusion; as if He had purposely casten them in one mould. More particularly, we see, He beginneth them all with this, *Thus saith he, &c.* Thereby to evince it to be His Word. A main thing to be adverted to, as the foundation both of Preaching and Application, that it may be made out, at first, to be warranted by the Lord; and so to be His Word, as if He Himself were speaking. 2. He proposeth in them all, some stately stile and title of Himself: which is also a main thing to be adverted to in Preaching, that at the entry, both Ministers and Hearers may be affected with the Majesty of Him, who is Master of the Ordinances, by some serious, grave, and weighty insinuation, Thereby to dispose both for the more fit speaking and hearing. 3. He doth begin at these things which are more general, and belong to information, as in letting them know their case, and His thoughts of them: then he cometh to particulars. 4. In particulars He premiteth clear discoveries and convictions of sin, to exhortations, to duties, and offers of the Gospel: and He premiteth exhortations to motives, whereby He presseth them. And lastly, He closeth with what is most pathetick and affectionate; either in way of threatening or promise, having that weighty admonition added, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear, &c.* and so He beginneth by working them up to some serious composed frame of spirit, and closeth with some affectionate impressing of the thing upon them in the most pathetick manner. Although this here, be most in application; yet we conceive that this order of proposing what is more general and doctrinal, and which serveth to the clearing of the judgement in the first place, and the subjoyning of what is more convincing, pathetick, and affectionate which is done by way of use and application in the last place, That thereby hearers may be dismissed with some impressio of the thing; this order, we say, may be well gathered hence. And indeed, it is the most native and genuin order, first, to inform the judgement, and thereby to make the readier way to work upon the conscience,

will, and affections. To this purpose see *Act. 13.* how Paul doth there proceed and close, *vers. 38, 39, &c.*

17. In all this, the Lords way holdeth forth His great design of gaining them to whom He speaketh: so as it satisfieth Him not to exoner Himself (to speak so of Him) in doing of His duty; but He is zealous to get His message received; and, in sum, to get them saved: therefore weightily doth He follow it, inviting, exhorting, pressing and protesting as unwilling to be refused. This indeed is a fountain-qualification of a Preacher, to be travelling in birth til Christ be formed in hearers; and so to Preach to them, as hungering and thirsting for their Salvation, and not having only before him the proposing of some profitable matter, or the handling of some point exactly; nay, not only his own exoneration, and the justifying of God by making the hearers inexcusable; but a single serious desire to have them gathered and espoused to Christ; that the proud may be humbled, the hypocrite convinced, and the Word made the favour of life unto life unto them according to their case. This, I say, is a fountain-qualification, from which many other qualifications do flow, it being seldome in any Minister but it putteth an edge and weight upon the Word in his mouth, as the want of it maketh the most part want favour, and, in the finest words, often to have but little weight.

18. We may gather here, That a Minister should hold forth the Authority of the Ordinance and Word, and of Him in whose Name he speaketh; and ought to take it upon him, not from supposed weight in himself, or addition to it by his gifts; but upon this account, that it is the Lords message, *Thus saith he, &c.* being that which giveth himself confidence and boldnesse in the delivery thereof, and which ought also to make it have weight upon others; yea, it followeth from this, that whatever a Minister be in himself, and whatever his thoughts be of himself and of his gifts; yet, being called to carry the Lords Message, he ought so to carry in it, as not to lessen the Masters Authority, by his fainting and discouraging apprehensions of his own inability and unworthinesse, and by his heartlesse and languid way of speaking; but, to speak it as the Oracles of God ought to be spoken, and as having weight in it self, for the vindicating thereof, although he be weightlesse: and that therefore there ought to be an eye to him for weight thereto, and a through-clearnesse that the thing which is spoken in the Name of the Lord is His Truth and Message, without which there can be no great confidence in saying, *Thus saith the Lord,* and with which a Minister may boldly and authoritatively speak.

19. As Preaching would be undertaken and begun with an eye to God; so both in the carrying on thereof, and in the expecting of fruits thereby, the weight would be still left upon the Lord: and Ministers would beware of attributing any efficacy, either to the warmnesse of their own frame in speaking, or to their liberty in pressing any point, or to the plainnesse and weightinesse in their manner of proposing or pressing the same, as if that had any influence (as from them) to give the Word weight and Authority upon Hearers; but stil the efficacy would be acknowledged to be from the holy Ghost, therefore, is that word alwayes at the close, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith.* Whereby, as at the entry the instrument is laid by, and the Lords Authority held forth as only to be acknowledged by *thus saith the Lord*; so in the close, the Minister, even when in the most affectionate temper and frame, is to leave what is spoke, as weighty only upon this account, that it is the Spirit who speaketh, and who only can make it effectual: and the more singly this be done, the more weighty will it be; and thus weighty preaching differeth from the most powerful rethorick that can be. See somewhat to this purpose, *Chap. 10. v. 4.*

20. In the general, we may see, that Application is the life of Preaching; and there is no lesse studie, skil, wisdom authority and plainnesse necessary in the applying of a point to the



the Consciences of Hearers, and in the pressing of it home, than there is required in the opening of some profound truth: and therefore Ministers would study the one as well as the other. Much of these Epistles is delivered in the second person, *I know thy works, I counsel thee to repent, &c.* for this end, that they might know it was them particularly that he meant. It is much for Ministers to get the Word travelled at hearers, so as to make them know that it is they who are reached: and that it is not only these that at first it was written to, or these to whom Christ and the Apostles did immediately preach that this Word belongeth; but that equally it belongeth to them, even to them who now hear it. Hearers are often ready to shift by the most particular words, much more when they are more shortly and generally touched. Hence, Preaching is called *persuading, testifying, beseeching, entreating, or requesting, exhorting, &c.* All which import some such dealing in Application: which is not only a more particular breaking of the matter; but a directing it to the Consciences of the present Hearers. And in this especially doth the faithfulness, Wisdom, and dexterity of the Preacher, and the power and efficacy of the gift appear. This is to fulfill or fully to preach the Word of God (a very significant and much used phrase, *Rom. 15. 17. Col. 1. 25. 2 Tim. 4. 7.* a thing also desiderated in *Sardis, Chap. 3.*) or to make a full proof of the Ministry, that is, when a Minister extendeth himself to the uttermost in his pains, seriousness and exercise of his gift, to be at the yondmost of the Peoples edification; and, as it is, *Acts 14. 2.* to speak so as many may be made to believe: an excellent copy whereof, is in *Paul, Coloss. 1. 28, 29.* *whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all*

wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus, wherunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily. And, *1 Thess. 2. 10, 11.* *Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably, we behaved our selves among you that believe. As you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, (as a father doth his children.)* We conceive therefore, that it would conduce exceedingly to make Application weighty upon the Consciences of the Hearers, if Ministers after the more general part of their Doctrine, and at their entry to make Application thereof, should pause a little, and by some serious and grave advertisement, put the people in minde, that even this Word so applied, or to be applied, is the Word and Message of God to them in particular, and as necessarily requisite to the office of a Pastor as the former general opening of the truth was: for, Hearers are often ready to take more liberty in shifting of Application, as if what were even so spoken warrantably were not equally the Lords Word with the general truth opened up. Thus we see *Paul*, after his opening up of general truths, *Act. 13.* when he cometh to make Application, putteth his Hearers to it by this Word, *vers. 26.* *Men and brethren, to you is the word of this Salvation sent, &c.* And as it is the main part of a Pastoral gift, dexterously to feed by Application; so are they the most thriving Christians, who, as new born babes, drink in the Word so applied, and take it home to themselves, and their own Consciences, as they do receive the general truths by their judgements. Which sheweth, that both Ministers & people have the greater cause to be watchfull and solicitous concerning this main mean of edification, to wit, particular Application.

## LECTURE I.

### CHAP. IV.

Verf. 1. **A**fter this I looked, and behold, a door was opened in heaven; and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me, which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

2. And immediately I was in the spirit, and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.

3. And he that sat, was to look upon like a jasper, and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.



Followeth that part of this Book, which is properly propheticall: for, *John* now hath a second call to come up, that he may have things which were to be hereafter shown unto him. Before we speak particularly to the words, it will be fit to premit somethings in reference to the Propheticall part which followeth, for our more easie and clear up-taking thereof

and proceeding therein.

First, It is to be remembred, that on *Chapter 1. vers. 19.* we did divide this Book in three sorts of things, to wit, 1. The things that then were. 2. The things which *John* had seen in his time. 3. The things which were to come thereafter. The first sort of things, have been already spoken unto in the second and third Chapters. That part of the prophesie which followeth, must then contain the other two, to wit, the things which *John* saw in his time, and which were to follow after that: both

these are comprehended under this expression, things which must be hereafter, *vers. 1.* for, that phrase, is not to be taken strictly, as if all that followeth were prophesies of things and events following the time of *Johns* having this Revelation manifested to him; because we will see in the sixth and twelfth Chapters the prophesie beginneth at the rise of the Gospel, and the white horse his beginning to conquer, and the womans travelling under persecution; both which, came some length before this Revelation was written. Therefore they are said to be the things which were to be thereafter, not because there was nothing of these events already come to pass, or begun to be fulfilled, as the former reason cleareth; but because the great part of them were of that nature, and also because the events which *John* had seen to be fulfilled in their beginnings, were but in perfecting, and so, in some respect, might be said to be to come thereafter also: upon which grounds, the whole Book was called a prophesie, *Chapter 1. vers. 3.* And so when this Book is divided in two parts, the things which *John* saw, that

that is, the things which were in his time, are comprehended under one expression with things that were to come. Again, when it is divided in three sorts of things, as in *chap. 1. ver. 19.* things to come are taken more properly and strictly, as comprehending only such things as were for the time to be fulfilled. And this is the reason why sometimes it is divided in two, sometimes in three parts, yet both to one purpose.

Secondly, the great subject and matter of all that is coming, is comprehended in this word, *I will shew thee things which must be hereafter*; which is not to be extended to all events to all were to fall out in the world, but to chief events that were to fall out in the Church, as concerning her thriving, persecution, &c. and what was to befall the enemies thereof unto the end of the world. Also it is to be observed, according to the former advertisement, that we are not to fix the beginning of these events at the time of *John* his having this prophesie revealed to him, but are to begin with the Gospels rise, and the first preaching thereof unto the Gentiles after Christs Ascension, which we conceive is comprehended under that expression, the things which *John* had seen, *chap. 1. 19.* as was said.

Thirdly, the Prophetical part of this Book, is ordinarily divided in six visions, or six prophesies: for when it is divided in seven, the first three Chapters are accounted one. Now whither we call them visions or prophesies, it is not much upon the matter; for, every vision comprehendeth a distinct prophesie, and contrarily; so that it will come to the same thing. When they are accounted seven, they are thus reckoned: The first vision, is in *Chapters 1, 2, and 3.* The second is in *Chapters 4, 5, and 6.* The third is in *Chapters 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.* The fourth vision, is in *Chapters 12, 13, 14.* The fifth is in *Chapters 15, and 16.* The sixth is in *Chapters 17, 18, 19.* And the seventh is in *Chapters 20, 21, and 22.* to the end of what is Prophetical. But of this division, we will speak more particularly, *Chapter 6. Lecture 1.*

Fourthly, These visions or prophesies, that are to come, are again to be distinguished in principal prophesies, and such as are explicatory only: we call these principal prophesies of things to come, that are principally and primarily such, that is which hold forth distinct matter in themselves, not holden forth in any former prophesie of that kind, and so, in respect of the matter contained in them, and time which they relate unto, they differ one from another: of this sort are the Prophesies of the seven seals, *chap. 6.* of the seven trumpets, *chap. 8, 9, 10, and 11.* and of the seven vials, *chap. 15, and 16.* for these have a dependencie one upon another, carrying the Prophesie of the estate of the Church on from *Johns* time unto the end of the world; and yet neither of them do express what hath been contained in any of the other. Again, we call these explicatory prophesies, which contain no new matter, nor relate to any other time different from the former prophesies, but are explicatory of the same things contained in some of these principal prophesies under other types and expressions: of this sort are, the third vision, *chap. 12, 13, 14.* which is explicatory of the first two principal visions of the seals and trumpets; and the two other Visions, that are from *chap. 17.* to the close, which are explicatory of the vials, especially of the last three: for, the first of them explaineth the fifth and sixth vials, in the *17, 18, and 19. Chapters.* The second, is explicatory of the seventh vial, *chap. 20, 21. &c.* So that in sum, there are three principal Prophesies set down in one form, to wit, of *seven seals, seven trumpets, seven vials*: and again, other three that are less principal and explicatory, which are expressed by other types, according to the division formerly laid down: of which more may be said when we come to that *6. Chapter*, already referred unto.

Fifthly, The form of this Book, as to the manner of Gods

revealing these prophesies, would be observed: for, to make things the more clear and plain to *John*, that which was to come is represented to him in vision, as already acted; and for this end, *John* in the Spirit is brought to heaven to behold this comedie, (to call it so) or tragedie: for, it may be called a comedie, in respect of the Godly, whose affairs have a sad beginning, but a joyful close: but in respect of the wicked, it is a tragedie; for, they have a seeming sweet and pleasant beginning, but a sad and sorrowful close. And because the Lord thinketh good to represent these things to *John* in this manner, there are several things in the progress of this prophesie, which are brought in for this very end, as the speaking and acting of several persons and parties, diverse interludes and songs, &c. which are not so much for the bringing forth any distinct matter or prophesie, as to make up that form wherein the Lord thinketh fit to reveal this prophesie: for preventing therefore of excessive and too curious diving to find out mysteries in these things beyond the scope, we would take notice of this advertisement, which we may more particularly consider in these instances.

First, To all these principal prophesies, there are some things preparatory, wherein the Lord setteth forth his Majesty and Glory; thereby to rouze up *John* and others to carrie the more humbly and reverently in the search of these prophesies: such is this part of the vision, *chap. 4. 5.* which is preparatory to the prophetical part following: for, in them, the Lord, as it were, representeth the place where this great comedie is acted, describeth the actors, and sheweth the nature of the things which are to be acted; but these preparations are not properly prophetical, as the visions themselves, which hold forth the things that are acted, are; yet, the allusion, which may be gathered from such representations in their general strain and scope is not to be despised.

Secondly, We will find plain words of Doctrine mixed-in with the darkest prophesies, as, *blessed are they that die in the Lord, blessed are they that keep their garments clean, &c.* In which and such like words, there is a plain doctrinal and comfortable meaning, the Lord thereby sweetening the darker prophesies, and giving His people somewhat to feed on in the search of these, as was once formerly hinted; yet from the scope of such sentences, and their being inserted in such places, and such like, some light may be gathered for understanding of what is prophetical beside them.

Thirdly, There are some interludes of songs and playings upon harps, mentioned in several places, which are not properly prophetical in themselves, but as circumstances in a parable, they are brought to make the intended mould of this Book compleat, and to make a connexion between the parts and prophesies thereof: these indeed are not to be abstracted from, or extended beyond their particular scope respectively; yet are they so wisely expressed by the Lord, that even they may be subservient to the understanding of the matter contained in the principal prophesies to which they belong. Of this same nature we take the representations of diverse parties, as actors in this comedie, to be, as sometimes Angels, sometimes Beasts, sometimes Elders, &c. which no doubt, is wisely done by the Lord, and wanteth not signification; yet we do think that deep mysteries are not to be drawn from such expressions, except something, in the current and strain of the prophesie, evidence the same to aim at such things, as at least a part of their scope.

Fourthly, We will also find many expressions borrowed from the Old Testament, and from the manner of the Prophets therein, especially from *Daniel, Ezekiel, and Zechariah*; yet often these expressions are to set forth a different thing from what was principally intended by them under the Old Testament; as by considering the particulars in the progress, will be clear.



We come now to the preparation to the first Propheſie, in the fourth and fifth Chapters: which alſo in ſome reſpect may be called preparatory to all the viſions that follow. It hath two parts: the fourth Chapter holdeth out the Maſteſty of God the Creator, and expreſſeth His praiſe, conſidering Him as ſuch: the fifth Chapter holdeth out the Glory and Maſteſty of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt the Mediator and Redeemer; this is not to be underſtood as if the Son were not honoured in the fourth Chapter with the Father, or the Father with the Son in the fifth: for that cannot be, ſeing they are One God; and the honour that is given in both Chapters is divine. But the works of Creation and Redemption, being the grounds upon which all creatures, eſpecially the Redeemed, are obliged to praiſe God, and the great evidences of His manifold Glory, Therefore both of them are expliciteſy ſpoken to, and the Lord, under both theſe conſiderations, taken up; thereby to expreſs Him to be the more eminently and ſingularly glorious: ſo, when the ground of the praiſe is given in the 4. Chap. verſ. 11. it is, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour, and power; for thou haſt created all things, and for thy pleaſure they are and were created.* Again, in the fifth Chapter, the work of redemption is mentioned, as we may gather from verſ. 9. and 12. yet ſo, as both are put together in the ſame thankſgiving, Chap. 5. ver. 13.

In this fourth Chapter, beſide ſome circumſtances, making way to the viſion, we have theſe three principal things, 1. A ſtately deſcription of the Maſteſty of God, who is deſcribed in His own appearance, as ſitting upon a Throne, like a Jasper, and a Sardine ſtone, &c. verſ. 3. which doth ſet forth (to ſpeak ſo) the poſture wherein God appeareth to John, thus ſtately in Maſteſty. They are excellent expreſſions, and yet they come far ſhort of the thing they repreſent, but they are the furtheſt that men can win to, to wit, by things known to expreſs, or ſomeway to conceive an unconceivable thing. 2. We have a deſcription of His train and attendants, ſet out at large from the beginning of the 4. verſ. to verſ. 8. wherein God is deſcribed from all the royal attendants that wait on Him, and the excellent and ſtately way He is waited upon. 3. From the miſt of the 8. ver. to the end of the Chapter, we have a deſcription of the Glory of God, from the work and exerciſe that theſe attendants are about: for, verſ. 8. it is ſaid, *They reſt not day and night, ſaying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.* And the expreſſions of all the Glory they gave him, are ſet out in ſeveral circumſtances to the end.

The ſcope is, to ſet forth to John, and all the Church, the Maſteſty of God, the giver of this revelation, the Creator of all things, He that guideth all this World, and ruleth His Church, and at the entry, to put an impreſſion of the Maſteſty of this God upon John, and upon all that ſhould read and hear theſe things that follow: for which end, He began with ſuch viſions to *Ezekiel*, Chap. 1. to *Iſaiah*, Chap. 6. and to *John* Chap. 1. of this Book.

To come more particularly to the words; There are in the firſt and ſecond verſes, four circumſtances that make way to the viſion. 1. *After this*, that is, after the firſt viſion, ſpoken of in the firſt three Chapters; for, though it is like (as Chap. 1. verſ. 10.) John had all this revelation revealed to him in one day from the Lord; yet the Lord gave him ſome breathings between viſions, Firſt, things preſent, and then things to come, being revealed to him; which is one cauſe why the propheſies and viſions of this Book, are diſtinguiſhed from each other.

The ſecond circumſtance obſervable is, the Lords giving acceſs to John to ſee what he ſaw, *Behold a door was opened in heaven*: what is meant by *Heaven* here, whether the Church Militant, which is often in this Book, and in Scripture called *Heaven*, or, whether the third Heaven, ſpoken of, 2 Cor. 12.2.

we ſhall not inſiſt on it: What John ſaw, was concerning the Viſible Church; and for their behove and advantage: but it is like, the place where John ſaw theſe things in viſion, was even that which we call heaven literally, God extraordinarily making way to him, to look in where his glory was maniſteſted; and it is called here *an opening of a door in heaven*, and there ſhewing him things to come concerning his Church, which were afterward to fall out; yet this is now ſhown unto John in viſion as if it were for the preſent time acted in a kind of comedie before him. And therefore may either be ſuppoſed to be revealed to him in heaven, or in a trance repreſented to him, as if it were there. And it agreeth beſt with the ſcope, that it be thus underſtood, to wit, that Heaven ſhould be in this manner opened to John, and things revealed to him there, which he was to reveal to the Church.

The third circumſtance, is, the voice which he heard, and what it ſaid, and the firſt voice which I heard, &c. that is, the former voice which I heard, Chap. 1. verſ. 10, 11. The voice of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which ſaid there, *I am Alpha and Omega, the firſt and the laſt*; that ſame voice ſpeaketh again, and reneweth Johns Commiſſion to come, and ſee, and write; and the voice biddeth him, *come up hither, and he will ſhew him, &c.* to tell that a heavenly mind is a great furtherance to acquaintance with the Myſteries of God, and earthly mindedneſs is a great hinderance and obſtruction; and then he propoſeth what things he hath to ſhew him, *Things which muſt be hereafter*. So that in the explication and application of this revelation, we are not to look back to the four Monarchies, but to Chriſts way with His Church in the dayes of the Goſpel, according to the firſt general which we premitted.

The fourth circumſtance, is, verſ. 2. *And immediately I was in the Spirit*: whereby it is like, there hath been ſome interval betwixt the ecclaſie he was in, Chap. 1. ver. 10. and this ecclaſie of ſpirit he is now in: and it is the ſecond way how our Lord Jeſus ſitteth John to receive theſe following Myſteries: Firſt, He carrieth up his affections, and maketh him heavenly, and then raviſheth him in the Spirit, whereby (as Chap. 1. 10.) in an extraordinary way John is, as it were, taken out of himſelf, put in an ecclaſie, impreſſions of things to come made on his ſpirit, and palpably and viſibly made diſcernable to him, in a Spiritual way, as if he had ſeen them with his bodily eyes.

We come now to the viſion it ſelf: And in it we have, 1. Gods throne (to ſpeak ſo) ſet forth, 2. Himſelf ſitting on it, 3. A deſcription of His Glory as he ſitteth upon it.

1. *Behold, a throne was ſet in heaven.* Theſe are borrowed expreſſions: for, God needeth not a material Throne, neither hath he any ſuch in Heaven; but as among Kings, Thrones are uſed as ſeats for judgement, and for places where they appear in their Royalty; ſo the ſame ſimilitude is borrowed here, to ſet out the Sovereignty of God in heaven, and in earth, & in His Church (eſpecially his Goſpel-church) which is called His Throne, Jer. 3. 17. for in it He hath an abſolute Dominion and Government, and is continually exerciſing and acting that Government as a King on his Throne. It holdeth out, 1. Not only Gods greatneſs and power: But, 2. His abſolute Dominion and Sovereignty; And, 3. His actual exerciſing of that Power and Sovereignty: which is further holden out, in the ſecond expreſſion, *one ſate on the throne*: the Throne is not empty, but hath one ſitting on it, acting and exerciſing that Power. Such words are frequent in Scripture, *Pſal. 11. 4. The Lords throne is in heaven; but his eyes behold, his eye-lids try the children of men.* It expreſſeth what is meant by his Throne, to wit, His abſoluteneſs and Sovereignty in Government, and His Juſtice, and ſeverity, being angry with the wicked every day. God in His Glory and Excellency is holden out, as ſitting on his throne, ver. 3. in other ſort of robes than ever were ſeen on the greateſt that ever were in the World; *He that ſat on the throne, was*

to look upon like a jasper, and Sardine-stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an Emerald: these are expressions, not of his form, (for He is purely spiritual and unconceivable) but borrowed, to set forth his splendor and Glory; and because that which men usually think most excellent, as gold, and precious stones, these are made use of for this end. There are two stones mentioned for resembling of His Glory: the first is a *Jasper*, an exceeding precious stone; it was one of these precious stones that was put in *Aarons* breastplate, *Exod.* 28. 20. and it is among these stones wherewith the foundations of the walls of the New *Jerusalem* are said to be garnished, *Revel.* 22. 19. And because one stone is not sufficient, even but to resemble the Glory and splendor of the Majesty of God, there is another added, to wit, the *Sardine-stone*: which is also precious as the former was. These being unknown to us, we shall not insist to describe them: for, the scope is clear, to wit, to point out this, that God is admirably and inconceivably excellent, even so excellent that all the most precious things in earth, being put together, are but poor shadows, and infinitely disproportionable resemblances of that excellency which is in him.

A second thing whereby this Glory is set forth, is, And there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. In *Ezek.* 1. (where the same description is almost in the same terms) there is a Firmament, a Throne, one sitting on it, and a rainbow; as the appearance of the bow that is in the clouds in the day of rain. so was the appearance of the brightness round about: the scope in both places, is, to shew the glorious Majesty of God, who, as He hath a Throne attributed to him improperly, to express His Sovereignty, so hath He this as a cloath of State over his Throne, thereby to shew how far His Sovereignty and Majesty is beyond the greatest Monarchs on earth: for, He only hath immortality; and dwelleth in a light that no man can approach unto, whom no eye hath seen, nor can see, *1 Tim.* 6. 16. therefore is justly called the only Potentate, *ver.* 15. all others being but slaves and worms in comparison with him. And that this bow is compared to an Emerald, is to shew that it was a more glorious thing than that rainbow in the clouds, which is visible to us. This rainbow, *Chap.* 10. *vers.* 1. is said to be upon his head; whereby it would seem, that it is something which He doth (as it were) account His Crown and Diadem of Glory: It is like, that respect is here had to that Covenant, which the Lord made with *Noah*, that the waters should not overflow the earth, whereof this rainbow was given as a sign and seal for the confirmation thereof, *Gen.* 9. 13. and the mentioning of it here and *chap.* 10. is not to relate to that particular promise, that the earth should not be drowned, but is to relate unto the Covenant of Gods Grace through Christ Jesus with his true Church: for, when it is called, a bow, in sight like unto an Emerald, it pointeth out an excellency beyond the ordinary rainbows: and so may be thought to relate to a more excellent Covenant. And indeed considering that this is an eminent piece of the Lords Glory, and as it were, a Crown, we can apply it to no other thing. In reference to the scope in these places, it doth hold forth, 1. That this glorious God, who is the Creator of all, is a God who hath condescended to Covenant with his People. 2. It holdeth forth, that this gracious condescending of his to enter in Covenant with them, is a main part of his Glory and Majesty, which He accounteth to be as a Crown unto him.

3. It holdeth forth, that as the Lord doth not reveal his glory to his People abstractly, but in the way of his Covenant; so his People cannot winn to the comfortable thoughts of the Majesty of God, nor ought to look on his Glory, but as under that relation. 4. And more particularly, It is added here, to confirm *John* in this, that though the Church was to meet with many persecutions and trials at first from heathens, yet should she not be overwhelmed with the same; more than the earth can be overwhelmed again with water: and though after that, Antichrist and enemies within, should trouble her by Errours and Heresies, yet should she also be kept from being drowned by them; and therefore when the Lord beginneth the consolatory part of the second principal prophesie, and cometh to comfort *John* against the trials of Antichrist in the beginning of the 10. *Chap.* he doth there again appear with this bow upon his head, to shew, that he is no less mindful of his Covenant with his People, and of their preservation from being overwhelmed by enemies, than he is of that promise which he made to *Noah* in the place formerly mentioned.

From the scope, *Observe*, 1. The great necessity and advantage that there is for all that would know God, and the mind of God, to be rightly instructed what God is. It is the first lesson, that all, whether Ministers, or others should learn, to have right thoughts and impressions of the Majesty of God, and a right conviction of that glory that is in him.

2. As this is requisite to the uptaking of Gods mind in any thing, so is it particularly applicable to this Book: There can be no uptaking of the mind of God in these Mysteries, till we be rightly instructed what God is, and have the impression of His Majesty on our hearts, 1. Because it setteth out his absoluteness and Government over His Church, whether in the times of bloody persecution, or of prevailing errors: in all these, God sitteth on his throne governing. 2. That the Faith of Gods People may be confirmed, in expecting the performance of the promises to them, and the execution of the judgement here pronounced on their enemies, notwithstanding of many intervening difficulties; the eying of Gods absoluteness and Dominion; maketh for this. 3. The looking on Gods absoluteness is necessary at the entry to this part of this Book, to stay our curiosity, and the needless vain searching that curious spirits may decline to, and so go a whoring from the scope, and turn aside to vain jangling, whereby they obscure rather than clear the meaning. We close this, wishing for this impression in our meddling with any part of Gods Word, and especially in meddling with this prophesie.

*Obfer.* 3. Where God is rightly seen, He will be seen exceeding stately and Glorious; O so wonderfull! whom nothing can resemble, whom no tongue can express, nor eye behold, nor heart conceive! what were it to imagine thousands of mountains of the most precious stones imaginable, and thousands of Suns shining in their brightness? these are inconceivably short of God, and the glory that is in him; what an excellent happiness will that be to dwell with this God for ever? to behold his face, to see him as he is, and to be capacitate (to speak so) to know him, as we are known of him? Wonder and admire at him, who is glorious in Holiness, fearful in Praises, doing wonders, terrible in Majesty, and in all perfections past finding out: To him be praise for ever. Amen.

## LECTURE II.

Ver. 4. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats, and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment, and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

5. And



5. *And out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thundrings, and voices : and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.*  
 6. *And before the throne there was a sea of glasse like unto crystal : and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind.*  
 7. *And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.*  
 8. *And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him, and they were full of eyes within,---*

**T**Hese Verses hold forth the second thing in the Chapter, to wit, the glorious attendants of this great God, who sitteth upon His Throne as great Sovereign of heaven and earth. Great Kings have their thrones, and their cloaths of State, the Lord is beyond them in both these: they have also their inferiour Judges, Nobles, and Counsellors waiting on them, as also, others to execute their orders and decrees; the Lord is brought in here as more eminently furnished with glorious attendants and instruments to execute His pleasure, than any that ever was heard of.

Before we proceed, one thing is needful to be cleared, to wit, whether the scope of this vision be to represent the Glory of God, as it is manifested to the Church Triumphant in Heaven, and the Spirits of just men made perfect? or, whether it be intended to expresse the Glory of God, as shining in His Ordinances, in the Church Militant? *Ans.* We conceive neither of these is to be secluded, but both may be well included: for, to consider God, as manifested in His Glory in heaven, agreeth well with the scope; as aiming thereby to impresse the reverence and awe of the Majesty of God upon hearts: yet we say, that this is not only intended; nor is the other to be excluded: because, 1. It also agreeth well with the scope, which is to set forth events concerning the Militant Church, and for that end to represent (as it were) a Theater and actors for bringing about these events, whereof the Majesty of God is Supreme Governour, &c. Now, it conduceth more to the scope, and cometh nearer what is intended, to conceive this representation as holding forth Gods Glory and Why in His Militant Church. 2. It is also usual in this Book to expresse the Visible Church under the Title of *Heaven*, and things done in it, by similitudes of things, set forth as acted in heaven, as in the progresse we will see. 3. This preparation being consolatory against the coming trials of the Church, (for which cause the Lord appeareth with His bow about His Throne,) it will agree best to that part of the scope, to apply it to the Militant Church, by which His glorious presence therein, His nearnesse thereto, His care and protection thereof, &c. will most manifestly and comfortably be set forth. 4. There is a resemblance between the Lords glorious presence in His Church and that which is in heaven: for, He hath a glorious Throne of Grace in His Church as He hath one of Glory in heaven; and what is more immediately manifested in Heaven, doth someway shine by His Ordinances amongst His people. 5. If we consider all the attendants mentioned in this, and in the following Chapter, particularly, *vers.* 10. we will find it necessary to understand this, as respecting the Church Militant; because some are spoken of, who are *redeemed, and are to reign upon the earth.* Whence, we conceive, it is not unsuitable to look upon this representation as expressing Gods glory in His Militant Church: which is represented by Heaven and the practice of perfected Saints there, to shew unto them, while here, a copy of their duty in praising and thanksgiving, and in doing the will of God in earth as it is done in Heaven.

We come then to consider more particularly this description of the Lords excellent train and attendants. First, *vers.* 4. there

are round about the throne four and twenty seats, and upon the seats, I saw four and twenty Elders sitting, and they had on their heads crowns of gold. By Elders here, we conceive, are understood the true professors of the Militant Church in the dayes of the Gospel: for, in the Song, *Chap.* 5. *vers.* 9, and 10. we will find that they are such as are redeemed, such as by that Redemption are made Kings and Priests, as all Believers are, *Chap.* 1. *vers.* 6. and to reign upon earth, which sheweth, that they are Members in the Church Militant: and they being followers of the four beasts, and priviledged but with such priviledges as are common to all Saints, it appeareth they are not Officers or Guides, but private Professors. They are called *Elders* for the dignity which they are advanced unto beyond others, to be, as it were, Elders and Governours in Gods House in a spiritual sense: in which respect, they are called Kings and Priests, *Chap.* 5. *vers.* 10. or, as the Word is usually taken in the New Testament. they are accounted for special Ministers and Servants, having a nearnesse to God, and to share of His Glory which none else in the world had; and thus the Lords People are called His *Ancients*, or *Elders*, *Isa.* 24. *vers.* 23. They are said to be *twenty four* in number; which we conceive to be a definite number for an indefinite: it may be there is an allusion to the twenty four courses that David appointed for the service of the Tabernacle, *1 Chron.* 25, 26, 28, &c. to shew that the ministration of the New Testament is no lesse Glorious. Also seeing the Church in old was reckoned by twelve Tribes, who it is like had their twelve Princes, as Elders and Governours answerable to that number; so, twenty four is mentioned here, to shew, that the Church, in the dayes of the Gospel, shall be extended to a double and greater number of Saints than was at that time: but on these we shall not insist, seeing the general may be safely rested in. Again, they are said to be *clothed in white raiment*: which sheweth, that their Innocency is their greatest glory, or their most stately robe, and the greatest bage of their dominion: for, *white raiment* signifieth either Christs imputed Righteousnesse, or their begun Sanctification, as we heard, *Chap.* 3. *vers.* 4. and is often elsewhere in this Prophesie. The last thing spoken of these Elders, is, they have *four and twenty seats, or thrones, upon which they sit, and on their heads, crowns of gold*: Both which, are to shew, 1. The settled and secure happinesse that these possesse beyond all others in the world. 2. The spiritual Dominion that they have begun in them here over their lusts, and spiritual enemies: in which respect, they *reign even on the earth*, *Chap.* 5. 10. And 3. It is to give a type of the glorious Dominion that is laid up for them in Heaven, when they, having been Assessors at the judging of the world, shall be set down upon one Throne with Jesus Christ, as was promised, *Chap.* 3. *vers.* 21.

In *vers.* 5. We have the second thing whereby this stateliness is expressed, *and out of the throne proceeded thundrings, and lightnings, and voices*: It is like there is an allusion to Gods manner of giving the Law, *Exod.* 19. whereby He appeared so terrible, that even Moses did exceedingly fear and quake; And, *Deut.* 33. 2. It is said, that from His right hand went a fiery Law: the scope is, to shew, that though God appear without

without great outward splendor and terrour in His Ordinances, in the dayes of the Gospel; yet is there in His Church Power and Glory whereby the mightiest may be terrified and confounded: in which respect, the Church is terrible as an Army with Banners, Song. 4. and 10. and the witnesses, Chap. 11. vers. 3. and 5. though prophesying in sackcloth, are said to have fire proceeding out of their mouths, and to bring on many other dreadful plagues. By this He would teach men to approach to Him with fear; for, *He is a great God, and to be had in reverence of all that are about him*, Psa. 89. 7.

There is also a third thing observed in that fifth vers. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God: by these we understand the holy Ghost in His manifold and various operations, as we heard, Chap. 1. vers. 4. and by comparing Chap. 5. vers. 6. it is clear: for, these seven Spirits are the horns and eyes of the Lamb, that sheweth both the Omnipotence and Omniscience of the same, and they are sent forth into all the earth, which could not be, if the Spirit were not infinite and Immenſe, and so cannot be understood but of the holy Ghost. Whereby the way, we may perceive the absurdity of the application of Doctor Hamond on this place formerly mentioned, who doth apply these seven spirits, as representing the seven Deacons of the Church of Jerusalem. These operations of the Spirit, are compared to Lamps, because of the shining light that floweth therefrom to the Church: they are Lamps of fire burning, that is, to point out that the saving operations of the Spirit have heat, and a purifying efficacy with their light, to warm the heart with love to God, and to consume and eat up the dross of corruption that is in the same: therefore it is said of Christ, Matth. 3. 11. that He should Baptize with the holy Ghost, and with fire: which last word expresseth the nature and efficacy of the former. They are called seven lamps, or spirits, because though there be but one and the self-same spirit, yet there are diversities of gifts, and differences of administrations and operations, as it is, 1 Cor. 12. 4, 5, &c. of which we spoke, Chap. 1. Lastly, These lamps are said to be before the throne, to shew that as Kings have their Thrones and Courts lightened with lamps and torches, so the Lord hath His Church lightened by His Spirit, and hath the operations thereof, as it were, so placed, as thereby light may be given to His Church and Elders that are round about Him; this is a special part of the Lords stateliness, and of the Churches Glory, that His spirit is there; and by Him it is Covenanted to His Church for their good unto the end of the world, according as the word is, Isa. 59. 21. *As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, My spirit that is upon thee, and my word which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seeds seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth, and for ever.*

The fourth thing marked as before this Throne, is in the beginning of vers. 6. And before the throne there was a sea of glasse, like unto chryſtal: A sea, is a great vessel for containing of water, called a sea, for the bignesse thereof, as 1 King. 7. 23. It is said that Solomon made a molten sea for the use of the Sanctuary: The end thereof was, that therein the Priests might wash their sacrifices, and also themselves in their approaching unto the Altar: this was both for great use and ornament in that legal service, and also was typical of Jesus Christ, by whom we, and our sacrifices are accepted in our approaches to God. By it here, may not unfailly be understood the blood of Jesus Christ in its efficacy, which doth really that in the Church, which was but typically performed by that sea in Solomons Temple. Certainly all circumstances will agree well to confirm this: For, 1. It agreeth well to the scope, to shew the glory of God in the Church; for, it cannot be denied but this blood is one of the special ornaments thereof: hence,

Hab. 12. 23. and 24. when we are said to come to the heavenly Jerusalem (which doth there expresse the Millitant Church) it is also added, that we are to come to God the Judge of all, &c. to Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant; and that excellent Society is closed with this sweet expression, *and to the blood of sprinkling, &c.* which intimateth this to be a main comfortable part of the glory and furniture (to say so) of the Gospel-church. 2. Seeing the gifts of the Spirit are mentioned immediately before in their sanctifying vertue, it is not unsuitable that the justifying vertue of the blood of the Lamb should be understood by this, as joyned therewith; for, they go well together: therefore Chap. 1. 5. 2. this sea is said to be mingled with fire: which is to be understood of this fire of the Spirit here placed with it. 3. This will agree well with the reason why it is called the sea, to wit, to shew the fulnesse thereof, and the greatnesse of the efficacy of the same. 4. It is before the throne, to shew that God hath provided that blood to wash sinners, that they may approach unto Him with boldnesse, as may be gathered from Hab. 10. 19. and withall, that there is no approaching to Him but by the same. Lastly, It is said to be of glasse, like unto chryſtal: which we conceive is not to expresse the brittlenesse thereof; for, the mentioning of it to be like chryſtal contributeth nothing to that, But is to expresse its excellency and fitnessse to contain and preserve what is in it clean and pure; in which respect, it is of an excellency beyond that of Solomons, which was but of brasſe. Yet, it may also signifie how reverently and warily it ought to be made use of, lest by proud presumption that blood be trod under foot and despised, which is so tenderly reserved, as is in a sea of glasse. This interpretation we think is agreeable to the scope, and also not inconsistent with that which is spoken, Chap. 15. vers. 2. of the Saints their standing on this sea after their victory over the beast, which may well be understood to be their washing of their robes, and making them white in the blood of the Lamb, as the expression is, Chap. 7. vers. 14. which also relateth to the same persons, and in the same condition: for, there is no obtaining of victory over the beast by any, nor yet a maintaining of the same, but by having footing upon Christ by Faith, which will make the Saints indeed to sing as Victors and Conquerours over all, which is confirmed by Chap. 12. vers. 11. *They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, &c.* I know it is ordinarily applied to the world and its brittlenesse, which hath a sense and application not un-useful, yet, considering that this is mentioned as one of the ornaments which wait upon the Lord in His Church, and as a singular evidence of His Glory; and considering that it is placed before the throne, even in that same room which the seven spirits of God have; as also considering that it must be conceived to be within the guard of Angels, mentioned, Chap. 5. vers. 11. We conceive, it cannot agree to the world, taken as distinguished from the Church, especially considering, that its being resembled to a sea of glasse, and that not of common glasse, but that which is as chryſtal, is not to aggrege the brittlenesse thereof, but clearly to commend and set forth its excellency, as being something of more than an ordinary value. Beside, this word sea, in this place, doth not look to these raging waters, which are called sea, as contradistinguished from the dry land (the mistake whereof may be the ground of this usual application) But it expresseth a great vessel made for use and ornament, and accordingly made use of in the houses of great men, and was particularly mentioned among the ornaments of the Temple and Ceremonial worship, as was formerly marked, and is especially for washing, or bathing thereinto. Now, these considerations will by no means suffer it to be applied to the world, as expressing the vanity and worthlesse thereof; neither will there be any just analogie found betwixt the two, whereby the one may be found to resemble, or to be resembled by the other.

The last thing mentioned here for the commendation of this



glorious Train, is *four beasts*, which are largely insisted on, *vers.* 6, 7, and 8. That these *beasts* are mentioned immediately after the sea of glasse, it sheweth, that by the *sea of glasse* must be understood something that tendeth to the commendation of Gods presence in His Church, seeing it is placed in the midst of the other commendations; for that these *beasts* are mentioned to set forth His Glory, cannot be questioned. The word rendered *beasts*, is in the Original *Qāa*, and might be well translated *living creatures*, as it is, *Ezek.* 1. or, *living wights*. By these are not understood Angels, as in *Ezek.* 1. and 10. because, *Chap.* 5. 10. &c. they are among the Redeemed, and *vers.* 11. are expressly distinguished from the Angels, who are said to be round about them: and indeed their following description, being compared with that of these living wights, or Cherubims, *Ezek.* 1. there will be found a great difference. Nor, Secondly, by them can be understood any of the glorified Triumphant Church, because of the reasons that were given when we spoke of the Elders; for, they also reign upon the earth, *Chap.* 5. 10. and the scope is, by them to expresse something of the Church Militant. We conceive therefore by these *beasts* so described, are understood the Ministers of the Church in the dayes of the Gospel, as being distinguished from professors, who are called *Elders*, and as being described like Angels, to shew their eminency in some respect beyond the other. For, 1. These *beasts* or living creatures, (for some of them are like to men) do ever go before the Elders in the worship of God, as guides to them therein. 2. Because they do invite, excite and inform others to and in their duties, as they say *come and see*, *Chap.* 6. *vers.* 3, 5, 7. 3. They are described as these Cherubims or Angels are, *Ezek.* 1. and yet being such Angels as are Members of the Militant Church, they must be understood of the Ministers of the Gospel, seeing these are ordinarily designed by the title *Angels* in this Prophecie: it is therefore the more likely that they are described after the manner of Angels, even as they get their name. 4. We will find all the particulars of the description to be pertinently applicable to them; As, 1. They are said to be *beasts*, or living creatures, to shew a special activity and fitness that is communicated to them even beyond others. 2. Their number is *four*; which is lesse than the number of the Elders or Professors was, yet sufficient to carry the Lords message to all the four corners of the earth: and, as it were, to be upon all sides of the Lords Throne for the edification and oversight of His People, as the Tribes of Israel marched with four standards on all the quarters of the Ark. 3. They are said to be *full of eyes before and behind*: they have not one eye, but many eyes, because they have many to watch over, and many snares to give them warning of. They have eyes before, that is, to shew their dependence on God, who being the great Leader and Captain that goeth before His People, these that are under-guides have their eye on Him for direction in the way that they ought to lead their people in: and thus their eyes before, are mentioned before their eyes behind, to shew, that ere they give any direction to the Flock that follow them, they will look to the Master for His orders; and so have their eye upon Him, as the eyes of Servants look unto the hands of their Masters, for observing of their directions, *Psal.* 123. 2. They are also *full of eyes behind*, to shew, that they are watchful over these committed to them, by pointing out that way to them which they had discovered from God, and by watchful observing how they follow the same, as the word is, *Psal.* 32. *vers.* 8. *I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go, I will guide thee with mine eye*: which is to expresse the most tender way of direction and instruction. Also these expressions serve well to shew their particular watchfulness over themselves, who have eyes before them, that importeth tenderness in the undertaking of any thing; and eyes behind, which respecteth their tender observation of their by-past failings. 4. These *beasts* are

placed in the *midst of the throne*, and round about the same: It may seem strange-like to say they are both in the midst of the Throne and about the same; yet, in the Scripture-language, to be in the midst of a thing, is to be near it, or to be fully upon it; and this part of the description sheweth their nearness to God, and their dignity beyond others: for, the Elders had Thrones, and Crownes; but these *beasts* and Ministers have the same Throne with the Lord, as being nearer to Him in respect of their service, and as being of more eminent dignity, because they are Ambassadors for Him, and act in His stead, and in His Name, and by virtue of the same Authority, *2 Cor.* 5. 20. They are round about the Throne, also: which is not to be understood as if they were (to speak so) without the circle of the Throne; but it is to shew the Lords wise way of disposing His Ministers unto all quarters for His Churches edification: so that all of them are not together, or upon any one side of the Throne, but they are disposed by Him upon all quarters thereof, for edifying of the Elders, or, His People, set out by them, which are round about the Throne, as we formerly heard.

In the seventh Verse, we have a more particular description of the several shapes of these *beasts*, which is the fifth thing by which they are described: the first *beast*, is like a lion; the second *beast* like a calf; the third *beast* had a face as a Man; the fourth *beast*, is like a flying Eagle. By this diversity of forms, or shapes, is set forth the diversity of gifts and furniture, which the one holy Spirit useth to dispense unto the Ministers of the Church, as *1 Corinth.* 12. 4, 5, &c. and hereby the Lord sheweth, that as private Christians may be more eminent in some Graces than others, so Ministers are some of them eminent in one gift, some of them in another, as the Lord mindeth to make use of them, (as we may see by comparing *Barabas*, the son of consolation, with *Boanerges*, the sons of thunder) yet all these gifts work for the good of the one body of the Church, that there may be no schism or defect in the same, as it is, *1 Corinth.* 12. 25. In the description of these Cherubims, or living Wights, *Ezek.* 1. every one of them hath all these properties and perfections, as their description cleareth; because the scope is there to describe holy Cherubims; but here, being applied to Ministers of the Gospel, not one of them hath all these properties; yet all of them joyntly have them all: which sheweth, that though the Lord furnish not every Minister eminently with all gifts, that yet He useth to furnish Ministers, joyntly considered, with what gifts are needful for His Churches good; so that what one wanteth, another hath; that the hand, and the eye may acknowledge they have need of the foot, &c.

More particularly, the first *beast* is said to be like a *Lion*: which doth expresse the zeal, undantoned courage and boldness wherewith some Ministers are eminently furnished in carrying on the work of the Lord, especially in difficult times. Thus were the Apostles furnished, and many others in after-times who have adventured boldly upon such hard work, as hath made the world to think them mad in such undertakings; yet have they been carried through the same. And from this we may see how our zealous Reformers have been set a work to pursue Reformation against so many difficulties, to wit, it hath been by being made partakers of this lion-like spirit. The second *beast*, is like a *calf*, or *ox*: which though he be not so bold in attempts as the other, to wit, the *Lion*; yet is useful for his dureableness and service. By this are set forth Ministers, furnished with patience, humility, and painfulness in labour, and submissiveness in suffering; which is also no little gift. And as the former prove profitable to the Church in respect of their zeal and boldness, so do they with their patient and constant drawing in the Lords yoke even under the crosse. This is not to be understood as if the first wanted patience, or the second courage; for there is a zeal and boldness in suffering,

as well as in doing; and if boldness have not a readiness to submit to the cross, it will not be approved: but the meaning is, that some Ministers who have patience and endurance, are yet (to say so) predominant and more eminent in the exercise of their zeal and courage; and others who are stout and courageous also; yet, in Gods providence, are called to vent the same in suffering, so as their patience and painful laboriousness appeareth to be predominant in them. The third beast hath a *face as a Man*: this setteth forth such as are furnished with reason, prudence and wisdom in an eminent manner, for managing the affairs of His house: which is not a humane natural policy, but a gift of wisdom and discretion bestowed by God upon them, as it is, 1 Cor. 12. 8, 10. And by this wisdom and prudence, they edify and build the Church as others that are more observably zealous and courageous; though they seem not to keep the same manner of proceeding in all things with the former; yet is the same end pursued by them, and the same rule is observed in pursuing of it, and the same Spirit acteth them all. Wherefore it would not be thought strange, if diverse Ministers, driving the same design, be yet thought different in their manner of following the same. The fourth beast, is like a *flying Eagle*: this sheweth the deep reach and insight wherewith God hath furnished some in the mysteries of the Gospel, as also a Spiritualness in their gift and strain beyond others, whereby hearts may be drawn from this earth to the pursuing after things that are above. Of those we may have occasion to speak, Chap. 6. Only now we see, how wisely the Lord fitteth His Servants for His Work, and doth usually time and tryeth such and such qualifications in Ministers according to the state of His Church. It is ordinary for some to apply these four beasts to the four Evangelists; but there is no ground for it: beside, John being one of these Evangelists, cannot be thought to invite himself to come and see, as all these four beasts do, Chap. 6.

In the eight Verse, these beasts, are further described. A sixth part of their description, is, *and the four beasts had each of them six wings about them*: this is borrowed from Isa. 6. 2, 3. &c. where the Seraphims are so described: (by which it further appeareth, that Ministers, the Angels of the Militant Church, are represented by these beasts) These wings shew their expedition and readiness to obey Gods will. And further from Isa. 6. we may gather the reason why they are called *six*, First, Because there is need of two to cover their face who are admitted to such nearness with God: this signifieth the impression which they have of the holy Majesty of God, and that

Godly fear and reverence that ought to be in Ministers in their going about holy things: this is commended in *Lev. Mal. 2. 9.* that he feared God and was afraid before His Name. Secondly, The use of other two wings, is, to cover their feet: whereby is expressed the sensibleness which they had of their own sinful infirmities: this is a thing well becoming a Minister in his ministerial duties, to be walking with fear and with humility, as being sensible of his own sinfulness, and the great disproportionableness that is between God and him. This is Paul's word, 1 Cor. 2. 3. *I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.* And it is certain, that where the first is, to wit, the right impression of Gods holiness, there this will be also. Thirdly, The last two wings, are for their duty; for, with two they are to fly. He is a good contemperate when Ministers walk under the impression of Gods holiness, and of their own sinfulness; and yet are not by these more indisposed, but made more fit for His work, and cheerful and ready in the performing of their duty. If the first four wings be not in exercise, the two last will not be very fit for their work; and it is Spiritual wisdom to keep all these in the right place.

The seventh qualification whereby these beasts are described, is, *They were full of eyes within.* In the sixth Verse, they were *full of eyes before*, which respecteth their dependency upon God; and *full of eyes behind*, which representeth their care over their flocks: here, they are *full of eyes within*, which holdeth forth their watchfulness over themselves, in that they so look to others, as they do not overlook themselves, but are seriously reflecting upon their own inward condition: so they are good Ministers, and they are also good Christians in their own private walk; and their being good Christians in having respect to their own Spiritual thriving, is no little qualification for their discharge of ministerial duties, and for their being admitted to so great nearness to the Throne of God. Ministers that have but eyes behind them, to look upon the ways of others, and have not eyes within them, to consider themselves, are but in a great part blind-guides, as Christ speaketh of the Pharisees, Mat. 23. 14. This having of eyes within, as well as eyes without, is expressed by the Apostle, 1 Tim. 4. 16. in that precept, *take heed unto thy self and to the doctrine*; and Acts 20. 28. *take heed to your selves and to all the flock*, &c. Ministers that look to others, would take their retirings to look upon themselves, lest they become strangers to their own condition: and what is spoken of Ministers here, is a duty well becoming every Christian.

## LECTURE III.

Verf. 8. ----- *And they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*

9. *And when those beasts give glory, and honour, and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,*

10. *The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,*

11. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

**I**N this part of the Chapter, we have the third part of this stately description: wherein the Majesty of God is set out by the great work and task that these attendants of His, to wit,

these four beasts, and the four and twenty Elders have: and that is the work of praise, whereby both, in their places, concur to have Him exalted. In the latter part of the 8. vers.



the four beasts begin; and in the three verses following, the four and twenty Elders go on.

In the Elders praise, we may consider these two, 1. The un-interruptedness thereof, *and they rest not day and night, saying, &c.* this is to shew, first, the great matter of their praise that doth still continue, they are furnished so with grounds thereof. 2. It is to shew their diligence and seriousness in letting no opportunity of praise pass: for praise being an affirmative duty, we conceive that this practice is to be expounded according to the precepts of rejoicing alway and praying evermore. 3. It may more especially set forth the diligence and seriousness that the Ministers of the Gospel are said to be furnished with, according to the word, *Isai. 62. 6. I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night, &c.*

The second thing in their praise, is, the matter thereof; which is the ascribing to the Lord three of His own glorious and essential Attributes. The first is, *Holiness*; which is thrice repeated, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God, &c.* This seemeth to be taken, from *Isai. 6. 3.* where the Seraphims begin their song with the same expression. This sheweth, 1. how infinitely and inconceivable holy the Lord is, when once mentioning of this Attribute is not sufficient. 2. It sheweth that no Attribute of God, will have more impression upon a tender Minister that is near Him than His *Holiness*: this affecteth the very Angels, and the more near any is admitted to Him, the more will this affect them: 3. It sheweth, that Ministers ought to be Angel-like in their speaking of God, and that it is a main part of their task to hold forth his excellency to others. The second Attribute, is, the Lords *Omnipotency*, *Lord God Almighty, &c.* By which the Lord is conceived as infinitely above all, and able to do all things, as *Job* speaketh, *Chap. 42. 2.* and it is both a notable ground of praise in reference to God, and a comfort in reference to His People, who have Him, (who is able to do above what they can ask or think, *Eph. 3. 20.*) covenanted to be their Almighty God, even under that same consideration, *Gen. 17. 1.* The third Attribute mentioned, is, His *Eternity*, in these words, *which was, and is, and is to come*: whereof often hath been spoken; and it is here mentioned to advance the Glory of God infinitely beyond all created Idols who have had their beginning and are going on unto a decay, and will ere long come to be destroyed: but the portion of *Jacob* is not so, who in all the tossings of the World, continueth the same, and of His years, there is no end.

After this, followeth the praise of the four and twenty Elders. The beasts go before; because they represented the Ministers and Guides, as we said. In it three things may be observed; First, The timing of their praise, *verse 9.* Secondly, Their practice, *verse 10.* Thirdly, Their verbal expressions or song, *verse 11.*

The time of the Elders praise is, *And when these beasts gave glory, honour and thanks to Him that sat upon the Throne, who liveth for ever and ever, they fall down, &c.* In which words we may see, first, what the work of the beast is. This is set forth in three expressions; 1. *To give glory to God*: this is their acknowledging of the Majesty that is in Him, and doth respect His own glorious excellency. The second, is, *Honour*: this respecteth the relation that is between Him, as Creator, and His creatures, who, having their being from Him, and standing in that relation to Him, ought by that tie, to honour Him. The third is, *Thanks*: which looketh to former benefits freely received from Him, by which there is an engagement put on them to be thankful; which here they acknowledge to be due, when they can do no more.

The first thing in these words, is, the rise or the timing of this praise of the Elders, to wit, it is *when these beasts give glory and honour, &c.* Which is to shew, 1. The orderliness of the

Lords Worship in his Church, every one keeping their own place. 2. It is to shew, that though every one be not a Preacher, and in that respect admitted to such dignity and nearness with God as others; yet all in the Church have ground and matter of praise, and employment in their stations sufficiently to express the same to the commendation of the Lords grace. 3. It sheweth also the sweet harmony that ought to be between Minister and People by their joyning in the same work. And, 4. It expresseth the great influence that Ministers example, faithfulness and diligence will have upon the quickning and upstirring of People to their duty: for when the beasts begin, then the Elders follow: And it is like, the silence and dumbness of many Ministers, may also be the cause why many Congregations are silent and dumb in this respect. And this may be a reason why Ministers are expressed by this title of *living wights*, or *living things* (as was formerly observed) because not only they ought to be lively and stirring themselves, but because by their liveliness they have great influence on others to quicken them also.

The second thing in the Elders praise, *verse 10.* is, their practice, set forth in three expressions, 1. Though these four and twenty Elders be sitting upon Thrones, yet, when they hear the beasts, or Ministers, mentioning the Holiness and Excellency of the Lord, the Word hath that weight with them as to make them quite their Thrones, *and fall down before him that sat on the Throne*: This is to shew, 1. their high esteem of God, before whom they cannot be too vile. 2. It sheweth their humble estimation of their own grandour, and their being denied to it, when any thing of the honouring of God cometh in competition therewith. And 3. It sheweth their acknowledging of all to be from Him, and their accounting of it their greatest honour, not to sit upon Thrones, but to be humble before Him, and to have Him high. The second thing in their practice, is, *They worship Him that liveth for ever and ever*: This is added, 1. to shew that their falling down is out of no astonishment, or confusion; but out of deliberation to glorify God. 2. To shew that the more humble Saints fall before God, the more fit are they to worship Him, and the better progress will they make therein. 3. It is to express the inward adoration of their hearts, as going alongst with their external humbled condition. God is expressed by this, that they *worship Him that liveth for ever and ever*, (even as it was in the former Verse, in the beasts their giving praise) that thereby it may be seen that they worship no Idol, but the living God, in opposition to the heathenish and Antichristian Worshippers: and also to shew, that they know whom they Worship, and are not Worshipping an unknown God. Further, it expresseth the reverent impression which they have of Him, so that they cannot mention Him but with such Titles and Attributes as prefer Him beyond all others. The third thing in their practice, is, and they *cast their Crowns before the Throne*: This sheweth further, their great zeal to the glory of God, their great sense of the huge disproportionableness that is between Him and them, their acknowledgement of their having their Crowns from Him, and holding them of Him; and their great, and only design to improve that honour and dignity to which they have been advanced, unto the honour of Him that sitteth upon the Throne, from whom they have the same: and that they account it their greatest dignity, if their honour might any way be a footstool for advancing, or extolling of His Glory in the least.

The third and last thing in the Elders praise, is, their song, or verbal expression, *verse 11.* when they are fallen down, they say, *thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.* Wherein 1. We have their acknowledgement of Gods gloriousness, and that praise is his due. 2. The reasons whereby they demonstrate this. In their acknowledgement

ledgement, we may consider both the matter and manner of their expression: The matter is in three words, 1. They acknowledge that *Glory* is His due, this floweth from the essential excellencies that are in Him. The 2. is *Honour*; This respecteth the Lords Sovereignty, who, by His Place, being Head and Lord of all, ought to be honoured by all. The 3. thing acknowledged to be due to Him, is, *Power*; which is confirmed from the exercising of His Omnipotency in the Work of Creation, as the reason following cleareth. Again, the manner of their acknowledgement is observable: For, they say not, we give unto Thee glory, honour, &c. but, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, honour, &c.* which is done, not because of their unwillingness positively to ascribe the same to Him; but because their hearts being warmed and affected with zeal to the thing, could not come up as they desired in the expressing of the same: And therefore (as it were) they say, although we cannot give Thee glory, honour, &c. as becometh; yet Thou art worthy of the same, and it is becoming, that Thou should have it, and we are so far convinced of the same, as by this acknowledgement, to put our seal to this Truth that Thou art worthy to have all praise, honour, and glory given unto Thee. And thus they rather express their affection to that work of praise, than their satisfaction in attaining any length therein. In which we have an excellent copy, a heart affected with Gods honour, to wit, it is always desirous that He should be glorified, and yet never satisfied with its glorifying of Him.

They give two reasons to demonstrate the justice of this their acknowledgement that God is worthy of all praise; The first is, from His interest in, and superiority over all things, by His creating of the same. *for thou hast created all things*; and so He being the great Master, and Porter of all things in Heaven, and Earth; there being nothing but that which hath its being from Him, and there being much Power, Wisdom, Goodness, &c. exercised in this Work of Creation, and to be read on the creature: Is it not just that all should ascribe glory, and honour, and power to Him? and is it not most reasonable that that relation of His should be acknowledged by all? Where we see, that though the Work of Creation be past many thousand years since, yet may it be, and ought it to be a fresh ground of Praise unto the end of the world. Also, we see that where the Work of Creation is rightly considered, souls will never want ground of Praise. And lastly, that these who are affected with the Glory of God Himself, will be discerning matter of Praise and admiration in all His Works, and in every Creature, which will be again turned about to His Praise.

The second reason of their Praise, is in these words, *and for thy pleasure they are and were created*: which in sum is this, not only were all things created by Thee, but when there was no tie upon Thee to make them, Thou of thy good pleasure thought fit to do so; and when Thou might have done in this manner, or in another, by that same good Pleasure of Thine, it was concluded to be done as it hath now come to pass, in which there was no other motive, end, or rule in proceeding but Thy own pleasure, and the setting forth of Thy Glory, for which end, they are still sustained in the being that they have: and therefore it is most just and equirable that Thou should have praise from all Thy creatures, which for this very end were created. This is a strong reason, taken not only from Gods creating of all things, but from the end which sovereignly He proposed to Himself in the same, to wit, that His good pleasure, which had wisely moulded middes for His own Glory, might be accomplished. This *Will or Pleasure* of God, doth not only respect the Work of Creation in general, but it holdeth forth His end in the manner of the same, and in the events and effects that follow thereon; In all which, Gods Will and Pleasure is accomplished, as the Word is, *Prov. 16. 4. The Lord made all things*

*for Himself*, that is, for His own Glory; yea, even *the wicked* that fight against God, and so bring upon themselves an evil day, were by the same Lord created for the glorifying of His Name. In this reason, there is, 1. a clear assertion of the Lords Sovereignty over all His creatures, who hath no other rule in the ordering and disposing of them, but His own will and pleasure: for, seeing that was the end for which He made them in such and such a manner, there is no ground to enquire a further reason of Him in respect of His Decrees, but that it was His will and good pleasure so to do. 2. It appeareth from this, that men will never rightly praise God till His Sovereignty over them be conceived aright and acknowledged; and that His will and pleasure is enough to stop our reasoning when we cannot come to satisfy our selves in His proceeding. The want of this, maketh carnal reason to fret, as if the Holy One were to be bounded and limited in His preceding: whereas, if we did consider, that He giveth account of none of His matters, and that it becometh not man to reason with God; *Rom. 9. 20.* nor the shepherds of the earth to strive with their Maker, this would put all to silence. And upon this ground, many bold Questions may be answered, as, Why did God make man mutable when He might have confirmed him in innocency, as He did the Elect Angels? why was he made so, seeing He foreknew his fall? Why were so many created and in such a posture as the Lord knew would bring upon themselves destruction? why are not all saved by Christ? Why hath He made an absolute decree of Reprobation concerning many? and such like. There can no other answer be given but this, *even so it pleased Him to do*, and that which is in the Text, *for His pleasure all things were created*; And this Sovereignty of God, which carnal reason doth so much murmur against, is here a main ground of praise, and that whereby He is exalted, as being thereby glorious and infinitely above all His creatures. 3. The asserting of this Sovereignty of God, is a Doctrine well-becoming the Church, whatever others think of it; and it is ever comfortable and refreshing to His People, and a ground of song to them, because there can be nothing more satisfying to them than His good Pleasure. And we suppose, that the opposing, or fretting at this Doctrine of Gods Sovereignty, will be found to be no great evidence of the disposition of one who is a child of God, nor to proceed from that native and kindly respect to God, which ought to be in creatures, especially in believers, The acknowledging and praising of which, is here a great part of the Churches Work.

The general scope of the vision looketh to these two; 1. To shew something of God. 2. Something in the Servants of God.

First, Something of God. And hence, *Obf. 1.* His absolute and sovereign Dominion in Heaven and Earth: which we gather from the similitude it self, He sitteth on a Throne, and hath all these attendants waiting on Him; and from the song, brought in to point at this as the scope, which sheweth the great end God had and hath before Him, in creating and preserving all things. It is to shew Himself glorious, from this ground of His absolute Dominion over all creatures.

2. Not only is He a stately King on the Throne, but He exerciseth His Dominion; He hath made all, and He sustaineth all for His good Pleasure, and sitteth on the Throne ever executing His Pleasure; and the world never wanteth a Governour, as long as this King sitteth on the Throne; and as there is a Sovereign God, there is also a Sovereign Providence in all the World, but more especially in the Church.

3. His being well furnished with means and instruments for doing His Work, is held forth: therefore He is said to have such attendants, fitted with wings and eyes, And *Chap. 5. 11.* He hath ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of Angels to execute His commands, round about, and before



before His Throne : these glorious Spirits wait on directions from Him, and are ready to do His Commandments, in caring, and providing for His Church : and He hath also beside Angels, His own Almighty Power, and thunderings to execute His wrath on enemies, as well as for the creating of things ; and for carrying on the Work of Grace, He hath seven Spirits to spread the everlasting Gospel.

4. The Lords great shor in all this, is, to get praise to Himself, and to give matter of a song to His attendants. These four generals are clearly held out in the Chapter, however we expound the words. And it is comfortable, that His praise, and our song are so joyned together, that what is matter of the one, is also matter of the other.

Secondly, Something in the Servants of God, is holden forth, however we look on these Beasts and Elders. 1. Their nature and qualifications are here holden out, and how they are fitted with eyes before, and behind, and within, each of them with six wings, and with several shapes, some being like a Lion, some like a Calf, some having a face as a Man, some like a flying Eagle ; in which their furniture for their work, and their activity in it, and their humble, serious, watchful and speedy manner of going about it, is set out : which should be a pattern to Believers how to walk in all commanded duties, and pieces of service.

2. There is here holden out the great dignity and happiness of Gods Servants, and attendants : however we expound the words, this is clear, that to be His Servants, is a great privilege ; they sit on Thrones, they wear Crowns, they are clothed in white raiment, they are all Kings and Priests to God, *Ch. 5. 10.* they are as the Angels, they attend on Him, and have places among them that stand by, *Zech. 3. 7.* It is the compleating of our happiness, to have liberty to look upon God sitting on His Throne. The Queen of Sheba saith, that *Solomons* servants were

blest that got liberty to behold his face, and hear his words ; but, O how much more happy are they, who day and night rest not, but are alwayes taken up in beholding and praising God ! for, a greater than *Solomon* is here.

3. We are here taught, what should be, and is in some measure the great task and work of the Servants of God, and of all that intoll themselves under that title and name, that is, day and night to be taken up with magnifying of God, to be making His praise glorious, *Psal. 66. 2.* which is to make it illustrious, and that by a native way of going about it. Again, here is holden forth the manner how we should go about it, to wit, with humility and reverence, with chearfulness and zeal, laying all we have before Christs feet, acknowledging all we have received, to flow from Him, giving Him the Glory of it, employing all, so as may most contribute to make Him great that sitteth upon the Throne.

Lastly, There is the delightfomness, and heartfomness of this task : though they rest not day nor night, it is not a wearisome work ; for, it is singing : and his saying *they rest not*, is not to hold out any burden, yoke or restraint laid on them : but to hold out the bendedness of their spirit within, with love and joy, that they cannot rest ; it is ( so to speak ) an ease to be venting it in praise. There is such joy and chearfulness from that wine that cometh from under the Throne, that they cannot hold their peace, but it is their continual refreshment, night and day to be speaking and praising. In a word, it saith this That it is a good thing to be Christs Servants, and that His service is a sweet work, and it will be known ere long how good a thing it was to be Christs, and to be His Servants ; and how happy a life it will be, to be praising Him. It were good some touches of it were warming our hearts before-hand, and that we had the proof and experience of it, what it is. The Lord give us to know it.

## LECTURE I.

### CHAP. V.

Verf. 1. **A**Nd I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, a book written within, and on the back-side sealed with seals.

2. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof ?

3. And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

4. And I wept much because no man was found worthy to open, and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

5. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not : behold, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

6. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

7. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.



**U**N this Chapter, the preparation to the following revelation goeth on: and in it He who was described in the former Chapter to sit upon the Throne, is here represented as having a sealed Book in His hand, which none in Heaven nor Earth can unfold but Jesus Christ the Mediator, who, for His Churches good, doth the same; which is turned to be matter of praise, in the last part of the Chapter. The scope of all tendeth especially to these three. First, To shew the absoluteness, determinateness and particularness of Gods Decrees in all events that concern the Church: which with Him are, as it were, written in a sealed Book. Secondly, To shew the special Office of our Lord Jesus Christ, who being upon His Fathers secrets, doth reveal so much of the same to the Church as is useful for her; and that without Him there is no access to the knowledge of the same. Thirdly, It is to make way to the more clear understanding of the Prophecies following, according to the mould wherein they are revealed: for it could not be understood what were intended by the opening of the first, second, or third seals, &c. were it not that here God is represented, as having a Book with so many seals in His hand.

We may take up the Chapter in these three parts. 1. There is a vision seen, to wit, *A book in the right hand of him that sat upon the throne, &c. vers. 1.* 2. There are some circumstances expressing both the difficulty and possibility of attaining to the understanding of what is written within the same: this followeth unto the eight Verse. 3. From that unto the end, is set down a most excellent song of Praise, as we will see in the words.

The first part, to wit; the vision of the Book, hath four things remarkable in it. As for the Throne, what it is, and who it is that sitteth thereon, we heard thereof in the former Chapter; and therefore may now proceed to these four things here set down. First, It is called *a book*: this is not literally to be understood, as if God had use of Books, more than He hath material Thrones, or Hands; but (as was shown on Chap. 3. vers. 5.) it is after the manner of men, to shew how particularly and orderly all things are determined by God, as if they were particularly inserted and recorded in a Book. By this Book here, is not understood Gods providence in general, nor yet His special purpose in reference to His Elect; but His Decrees concerning the special events that were to befall His Gospel-Church. In a word, It is this same Revelation: for what is afterward revealed to John, is by opening one of these seals, and the last seal will be found to comprehend both the trumpets and vials, as we will find in the progress. The second circumstance, is, that *this book is written within and on the back-side*, that is, in a word, it is all filled up, there is no blank in the same: for, *known to God are all his works from the beginning*, Acts 15. 18. and now new occurrence, which is so as to men, doth put the Lord to take any new counsel, or to make any new decree (for, to say so, there is no blank in His Register to contain the same) but all things were concluded of old in His counsel, and accordingly in time are brought to pass. Thirdly, This Book is said to be *in his right hand*: which sheweth, 1. That there are none accessory to His counsel, but Himself; for, He took counsel of none. 2. That He Himself is Master of His own purposes, and there is none that can alter His decrees, or change any of His purposes; for, the Book is in His own hand. 3. It sheweth, that what He hath once in His Wisdom concluded, He doth by His power proceed to execute, and that so as He cannot be frustrated of His end; therefore is He said to have it *in his right hand*: which sheweth both His admirable dexterity, & Omnipotency, that are exercised in executing the same.

The fourth circumstance is, this Book is *sealed with seven seals*: sealed, that is, undiscernable and unconceivable to any, as the words following do clear, and as may be gathered from Mai. 29. 11. although all things be known to God, yet are they unknown to Creatures, till they be particularly revealed by Him, or in His providence brought to pass. Again, this Book is sealed with *seven seals*: which is partly to shew the exceeding great depth of Gods secret counsel; whereunto none can reach, seeing it is not onely sealed with one seal, but with seven; and especially this number is so definite, because the following principle visions do so much consist of sevens: for, the number of the seals of this Book doth distinguish the steps of this first principal Prophecie. To clear it, we must know that in these times their Books were not like ours now, but generally were long scrolls of Parchment rolled up on a stick, as we may gather from the writings of the Old Testament: in respect of which form, one part of a scroll might be rolled up, then sealed; after that, another part rolled up, and that likewise sealed, and so forth, till there might be seven parts, and seven several seals: and therefore the opening of the first seal, would onely admit one to read that part of the scroll untill he came to the second, and again there were no reading of what followed untill the second were opened, &c. Of this sort is this Book mentioned here; for, Chap. 6. we see that the opening of every seal giveth some new vision, and that there is no understanding thereof till the distinct and several seals be opened.

The second part of the Chapter, which concerneth the opening of the Book, and maketh way for expressing the honour of the Mediator, followeth in the next six Verses. Wherein, First, There is a Proclamation made, to find out some fit person to open the same, vers. 2. Secondly, There is a disappointment, vers. 3. Thirdly, There is Johns exceeding great heaviness and weighedness therewith, vers. 4. Fourthly, There is a consolation against the same, first, intimated, and thereafter seen, vers. 5, 6, 7.

The Proclamation, vers. 2. is in these words, *I saw a strong Angel, proclaiming with a loud voice, who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?* This Proclamation is not made as if there were an expectation to find any creature by whom this might be done; but by putting all creatures to it, (and thereby declaring their insufficiency) the greater way is made for the glory of Christ, the Mediator, the performer thereof. The party proclaiming, is, an *Angel*: for even these admire Gods way with His Church, and desire the unfolding of the same. It is a *strong Angel*, to shew the concernment of the thing proclaimed, and that even the most excellent Angels count it their happiness to be serviceable to God in the affairs of His Church; also it maketh the thing proclaimed more observable. By comparing this with the 5. and 6. verses, we may see, that by *beasts*, are neither understood any of the host of Angels in general, nor some special Angels (as some allege) of a more eminent degree: for they are opposed to this strong Angel, who yet must be understood to be of eminency amongst them. Again, the matter proclaimed is observable, which is not, Who is able to open the Book, &c. but, *Who is worthy, or meet to do the same?* and this, upon the one side, is to put a dash upon all creatures, as being unworthy and unmeet to pry into Gods secrets immediately; and on the other side, it doth exceedingly commend the Mediator, who alone is found to be such. This is done with a *loud voice*, that thereby the mouths of all creatures may be stopped, and that this singular worthiness of the Mediator, and this His peculiar privilege might be afterward found to be the more unquestionable.

A second circumstance, is, the answer of this proclamation, or the effect which followed upon it; which may be gathered from vers. 3. *and no man in heaven, nor in earth, nor under the earth,*



earth, was able to open the book, nay, nor to look thereon: this is plain, and sheweth that not one of all the creatures, even of the most excellent Angels in Heaven, none of the men in earth, nor Devils in hell can reveal Gods secret counsel till it be done by the Mediator: nay, they could not look thereon, which is an aggravation of their dulness and ignorance in that respect: for they were so far from opening this Book, that they could not look upon the same. And if it be thus in the works of common providence, What could all creatures have attained to in the up-taking of the great Mystery of Godliness, God manifested in the flesh, &c. had not the Lord thought good to reveal the same?

The third thing, *vers. 4.* is, *Johns* heaviness, because of that apparent impossibility, *And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open, and to read the book, neither to look thereon.* Which doth set forth, 1. That *John* did esteem the understanding of what was within this Book to be of great worth. 2. That he did exceedingly long to understand the same. 3. That he seemed now to be hopeless of attaining this. 4. That this disappointment was sad and heavy to him. It is not like that it was *Johns* curiosity, which made him thus to weep; but conceiving the thing to be useful to the Church, it did affect him much to see the fickleness of all creatures, and mens emptiness in particular, for all their boasting of their attaining to the knowledge of so great mysteries: yet there may be some infirmity in this excess, by his thinking the thing desperate, because it was impossible to creatures, and his overlooking the Office and Excellency of the Mediator, who can do when all others give it over: which is a fault too often incident to Believers.

The fourth step, is, *vers. 5.* Where the consolation beginneth: for the Lord suffereth not *John* to weep long, even though his infirmity had occasioned his own heaviness. The consolation hath two parts: The first is, by sending good news, or glad tidings unto *John*, *vers. 5.* The second is, by making him a beholder of a comfortable sight, *vers. 6.* and 7. wherein he seeth that to be performed, which was told unto him.

In these glad tidings, we may consider, First, the carrier; Secondly, the comfort; Thirdly, the ground thereof. The carrier, is one of the *Elders*, that is, as was expounded in the former Chapter, some private Professor or member of the Church, whom, in way of vision, God maketh use of to help and comfort *John* in this his heaviness and infirmity: and what is here in vision, may be often really performed in the Church. From which we may gather, 1. That the strongest of Gods Servants may have their great fits of heaviness and weeping, and their mistakes of His dispensations, and be ready to count things much more desperate than they are. 2. The Lord is tender of His Peoples heaviness, even when it is out of infirmity. 3. His comforts are seasonably trysted, and often then are they most near and refreshful, when men think things most desperate. 4. He may make use of any instrument for the comforting of another; and when the strong are overmastered with heaviness, He can stir up weak Professors to prove comfortable to them. And in the last place, more particularly we may see, That weak Professors may sometimes be more comforted in the use-making of Christs Offices, and in exercising faith on Him, than great Teachers: who, by seeking to exercise their light, invention, and reason to satisfy themselves in things that are dark, may have many disappointments therein, and heaviness following thereon, so long as the Mediator is not employed; whereas the simple tender Believer, that at first looketh to Him for answering of all difficulties, may have much peace and cheerfulness.

Secondly, The particular comfort is expressed, *weep not*: which sheweth both that that was not the duty which *John* was called unto, though for the time he did let out himself therein; and also that there was not such ground for the same as he supposed.

And because simple directions will not prevail to comfort these that are heavy, In the third place, He giveth the ground of this, *Behold (saith he) the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the Book, and to loose the seals thereof:* which is in sum, thou mayst be comforted and stay thy weeping; for, though no creature be able to open the Book, yet the Mediator can and will fully do that business. He beginneth this with a *Behold*, thereby to rouse up *John* with the glad tidings that He was to tell him, and also to make what was said the more to be observed, and the party spoken of, the more to be admired. This party who openeth the Book, must be no mean person, seeing he doth what no creature in Heaven, nor Earth could do; and so is contra-distinguished from them, He is here expressed by two titles: the first is, He is the *Lion of the tribe of Judah*: this seemeth to be taken from *Gen. 49. 9.* where *Judah* is said to couch down as a *Lion*, and as an old *Lion*: who shall rouse him up? And this is attributed to Him, 1. To shew that He is of the stock and lineage of *Judah*, and the very *Messiah*, or *Shiloh*, spoken of there. 2. To point out the excellent qualifications wherewith our Lord *Jesus* is furnished for the undertaking and prosecuting of the most dangerous exploits, if so His Peoples need call for the same. He is indeed such a bold *Lion* as never drew back for a strait: and as none can rouse Him up but to their own prejudice. So none can expect otherwise to be dealt with, that rise up against Him. The second word, is, He is the *root of David*: this is taken, as would seem from *Isai. 11. vers. 1.* where He is called a rod out of the stem of *Jesse*, and a branch out of his roots; so that if we look upon *Christ* as Man and come of *David*, He is a rod out of the stem of *Jesse*, &c. or, if we look upon Him in a more Spiritual and mystical sense, as He is God-Man, Mediator and head of His Church, in this respect He is the *root of David*; because so, *David* as a member, hath his being from Him: in which respect, *Chap. 22. vers. 16.* the Lord doth stile Himself both the root and off-spring of *David*. And this two-fold consideration of *Christ*, is the only way to loose that Question which puzzled the Pharisees, *Matth. 22. vers. 42, &c.* to wit, How the *Messiah* could be both *Dauids* Son, and *Dauids* Lord. It is said, He hath prevailed to open the Book, &c. which intimateth many difficulties that the Mediator had to overcome in the executing of His Office; and yet withal, a most full Victory, that now this courageous *Lion* by His dying had obtained over them all, So that there could be nothing alleaged why He should not possess the priviledges that were due to the Mediator.

The other part of the consolation, is, by making *John* in vision to behold the performing of this, *vers. 6.* and 7. Wherein, 1. *Johns* looking is mentioned, and *I beheld*, (saith he) that is, having so good news told me, I revived (as it were) again, and looked to Him that sat upon the Throne, to see if there might be any hopes of that which formerly I supposed to be desperate. 2. It is marked what he saw after he had looked; and because the vision is wonderful, there is justly a *Lo* prefixed unto it. This vision is, in general, a vision of *Jesus Christ* the Mediator, whom now *John* seeth, to his great comfort and satisfaction, to be the performer of that which formerly he thought desperate. And because He is a singular Person, He is several wayes described in these two Verses. First, He is called a *Lamb*; this is a Title ordinarily given to *Jesus Christ* in the Gospel of *John*: And we conceive, it is especially for these two reasons, 1. To express *Christ Jesus* His Priestly Office, and His offering of Himself a Sacrifice for His People: therefore ordinarily, when He getteth that Title, something is added thereunto, as, *to take away the sins of the world, to be slain*, &c. as even here in this same Verse; which expressions do palpably relate to His Sacrifice and Offering. 2. It is to shew His mildness (to speak so) in reference to His People: for although He be a *Lion*, in the former Verse, in respect of His under-

undertakings for them against enemies; yet, in His dealing with them, He is more gentle than any Lamb, and this is mentioned as one of this High-priests properties, *Heb. 7. 26.* that He is *holy, harmless* or *illeſſe*, &c. which is no little commendation of Him to His People. In a word, He is a Lion to purchase and conquer, and a Lamb in dispensing what He hath purchased to His People. Secondly, He is said to be *as it had been slain*: so is He represented to *John* in vision, that it may appear by what means He thus prevailed to obtain such privileges for His Churches good, to wit, it is by His dying, and giving His life for His sheep: and upon this ground (*Joh. 10. 17.*) it is said, that the Father loveth Him, that is, accepteth of Him, approveth of Him in the discharge of the Office of Mediator; and as He as the Son of God was necessarily beloved without respect to this, so we ought to esteem much of what Christ hath revealed to us in the Gospel, and of what He revealeth to us in the same Prophecy; for, by His death He made way to have the same revealed unto us. Thirdly, This Lamb is placed in the *midst of the Throne*, that is, He is a partaker of the same Glory and Dominion and Authority with the Father, as He is God, and is admitted to His right Hand, and to Glory and Majesty, far above every name that is in Heaven and in Earth, as He is Mediator. And it is in sum, what is asserted, *Chap. 3. 21.* Also, He is in the *midst of the four Beasts, and four and twenty Elders*: which is not for nought expressed; But, as it doth shew, 1. His Dignity and Glory beyond them; So, 2. it sheweth His presence in the Church, upon the same Throne with the Father, that thereby His People may be the more bold in their approaches unto God by Him, seeing they want not a friend alwayes present in that Court. For this end also, He is said to be *standing*, some way to declare His readiness to execute what may tend to His Peoples edification and consolation; for, as a painful shepherd, He standeth to feed the Flock, *Micah 3. vers. 4.* Fourthly, He is said to have *seven horns and seven eyes*, and these again, are expounded to be the *seven Spirits of God*, *sent forth into all the earth*; by these, no created thing can be understood; for, that which is the Lambs power or horns, must be Omnipotent; that which is His eye, must be Omniscient; and that which is through all the Earth, must be Omnipresent: this therefore must be understood of the third Person of the holy Trinity, as was expounded, *Chap. 1. 4.* And *Chap. 4. 5.* Here He is called, in respect of His manifold operations, *seven horns and seven eyes* of the

Lamb, because of that order of operation that is among the Persons of the blessed Trinity, whereof we spoke in the places formerly cited. The last part of the description recorded here, is, in *vers. 7.* where the Lambs advancing (as it were) to Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and His actual taking the Book out of His hand to open the same, is expressed, *And he came and took the Book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the Throne*: this could not but be a comfortable sight to *John*, who having formerly given over the case as desperate, doth now see this lovely Lamb proceed so far in the discovering of what was contained in this Book. And here we have, first, the three Persons of the Holy Trinity distinctly holden forth: For there is 1. one upon the Throne with the Book in His hand; 2. there is the Lamb; 3. there are the seven Spirits of God distinct from the former two, and all these on the same Throne. Secondly, We may see the three Offices of the Mediator, holden forth here; For, 1. That He is a Lamb slain, signifieth His Priestly Office. 2. That He is upon the Throne, and hath horns and power, doth hold forth His Kingly Office. 3. That He taketh the Book to open, and to reveal Gods mind to His Church, is an express evidence of His being Prophet.

From all that is spoken, two things are mainly to be observed, 1. That the Lord hath a special over-ruling providence over all things that concern His Church. There is nothing that falleth out, which is new to Him, but what He hath determined and written down, as it were, before the beginning of the World. This is a great consolation to His Church, there is no enemy that doth rise up against her, nor any heresy that breaketh out among her members, nor any event that occasionally she seemeth to meet with, but these were fully determined by the Lord before the beginning of the world.

In the second part of the words, we see what excellent worth the Mediator is beyond all creatures in Heaven and Earth, how great need there is of Him, and how wretched and miserable we would be without Him. All the most glorious creatures in Heaven beside, and all the fulness of the Earth could not give us ground of comfortable worshipping before God, if there were not a Mediator. We may see also, that the great cause of His Peoples heartlessness, is, that he is not acknowledged in their straits. O how excellent a One is the Mediator! and O how happy a thing were it continually to be improving Him! Lord teach us that: and to Him be praise for ever. Amen.

## LECTURE II.

*Verſ. 8. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them, harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.*

*9. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation:*

*10. And haſt made us unto our God kings and prieſts, and we ſhall reign on the earth.*

*11. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many Angels round about the Throne, and the beasts and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.*

*12. Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing.*



13. *And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*

14. *And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever.*

**T**His is the third part of the Chapter, and expresseth the main scope of what went before, to wit, the exalting of the Mediator. This is cast in betwixt His taking of the Book out of the hand of Him that sat upon the Throne, and His proceeding actually to open the same, that this singular work of the Mediator may be made the more observable. The occasion of the Song, is in the beginning of *vers. 8.* And when he had taken the Book, &c. that is, when by this appearing of the Mediator in His Office they had ground to expect the opening up of the within-contained Mysteries, Then they praise.

The praise it self may be taken up in three parts, according to the several parties that take part therein. For, 1. The redeemed Church begin, and they sing, in the last part of the 3. *vers.* and in the 9, and 10. *verses.* Then, 2. The Angels follow, *vers. 11.* and 12. In the third place, all creatures are brought-in joying in this Song, *vers. 13.* And because the Redeemed have most interest in, and obligation to the Mediator, whose praise is peculiarly expressed here, Therefore, as they begin, so they close, *vers. 14.*

In the first part, First, The redeemed Church are described in reference to this work, *vers. 8.* Secondly, Their praise is expressed, *vers. 9.* and 10. In their description they are called *four beasts, and twenty four Elders*: whereof we spoke in the former Chapter, and shew that by them, most probably is holden forth the Ministers and Professors of Christs Militant Gospel-church; and this place doth confirm the same: for, they are contradistinguished from Angels, *vers. 11.* and are said to be Redeemed and made Kings and Priests unto God, which agreeth to all Believers even upon earth, as *Chap. 1. vers. 6.* Again, their work here, is, not only to praise; but to pray; for they have vials full of odours, as well as harps, *vers. 8.* And they are said to be sharers of Christs spiritual Dominion, and to be Priests to Him even on earth: yea, their spiritual Priesthood will most properly agree to that, according to the usual application thereof in Scripture. These Redeemed, are said to *fall down before the Lamb*: which is to shew their humble and reverend way of going about this work of praise, and was spoken of, *Chap. 4. vers. 10.* Lastly, They are furnished for this work, *having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odours, or incense, which are the prayers of Saints*; this sheweth their fittedness and readiness for the work; and it is done in expressions borrowed from the Ceremonial worship under the Old Testament, when yet the scope is to express the spiritual Worship that is given to God under the Gospel; By harps, are understood instruments for praise, as is frequent in the *Psalms*; and we will find the Saints in their cheerful condition (*Chap. 13. 2.*) so described. This sheweth a warmth and bendedness of heart, ready to burst out in the praise of the Mediator, and to make melody thereby within themselves before Him; which is more acceptable to Him and comfortable to them, than the sweetness of any material instrument whatsoever, as *Eph. 5. 19.* and *Col. 3. 16.* where we are commanded to praise with *grace in our hearts*, which may well be the thing signified by these harps. Beside this, *They have golden vials full of odours or incense.* Incense was used in the Ceremonial worship, when the people approached to offer up their requests to God; therefore we have the word, *Psal. 141. 2. Let my prayer be set*

*forth before thee as incense: vials, are vessels wherein these were offered; and so vials full of odours, will signifie a spiritual fittedness with the Spirit of Grace and Supplication (as is promised, Zech. 12. 10.) to pour out the heart to God in prayer as well as in praise.* They are two notable qualifications of Believers; and it is ordinary both in the Old and New Testament to understand by sacrifices and offerings, the moral duties of praise and prayer in the days of the Gospel. As to the last part, this is confirmed in the words following, *which are the prayers of Saints*: where two things are answered, 1. Would we know who these beasts and Elders were who have these vials: It is answered, they are *Saints*, that is, Believers, Members of the Militant Church, according to the usual acception of the word: and this confirmeth the former exposition which we gave of these parties. Again, would we know what these odours are which are in the vials: the Text saith, they are *the prayers of Saints*, that is, these odours represent the Saints: which may either be understood indefinitely, as interpreting what is meant by odours in the general, and so all the prayers of the Saints on earth in general may be called odours and incense; or, we may take it with a special relation to this place; and so the odours here will signifie the prayers of the same Saints who had the vials in their hands; and thus they bring not properly the prayers of others to offer up to God (which yet were not absurd, considering that these officers were living Saints on earth) but, they bring their own prayers, even as by harps is signified their own expressions of praise, or the praise expressed by themselves, as the Song following will clear. This therefore hath no affinity at all with the Popish Doctrine of the intercession of Saints departed, which is utterly cross to the scope of this place. It is to be observed also, how different this phrase is from that which is attributed to Christ, *Chap. 8: vers. 3.* where he alone offereth the prayers of all Saints, adding incense thereunto.

Their song followeth in the 9, and 10. *vers.* Where, 1. there is the expression of their praise, 2. The grounds or reasons thereof. Their song is said to be a *new song*; and *they sing a new song.* 1. Because the matter was so great and excellent, that no former expression of praise could, as it were, reach the same: for which cause (*Psal. 40.*) David saith, He had put a new song in his mouth, when by a new and singular mercy, He had given him matter thereof. 2. It is *new*, as contradistinguished from the more obscure expressions of praise that were under the Old Testament. Now, the Office of the Mediator being more clear, and He having made Himself more known to His People, they accordingly express His praise in a new song. The matter expressed, is, *Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof*, that is, in sum, thou art worthy to be Mediator, and to execute what belongeth to that Office. This looketh not to be very much, at the first, yet, there cannot be more said. For, if we will consider, 1. This expression putteth Him beyond all creatures; for, none of them was found worthy; and so by this, they acknowledge Him to be beyond all. 2. This expression hath in it an acknowledgment of His worthiness and fitness to be Mediator, and in all things to have the preheminency and a Name above every name that is named, which is the greatest conferred Glory that is conceivable, and more than Angels and Men are capable of, or

or can comprehend. 3. This expression implieth their hearty assent to Gods constituting of Him in that Office, and their exulting to see Him prosper and glorified in the executing of the same: which is a thing well becoming a member of Christs Body, and a subject of His Kingdom; and is the greatest length they can come at, to wit, to be assenters by their acknowledgement of His worth to Gods advancing of Him to this dignity.

The grounds of the praise follow in three steps, the last being alwayes more particular than the former, and an effect thereof. The first, is, *for thou wast slain*, that is, in the execution of Thy Office, and in obedience to the Fathers will, Thou hast submitted Thy self to death, even to a violent death, and accordingly hath suffered the same, and so Thou *wast slain*. This dying of an accursed death, is the great article and condition required upon the Mediators side of the Covenant of Redemption, upon the undertaking, and undergoing of which, all privileges promised to Him therein, are grounded; and from this, all the Works of Redemption flow: therefore here it is made the reason of His worthinesse to administer the Office of a Mediator in every thing, and why He cannot but be thought worthy to do the same, and to be praised by His People, because He was *slain*, and so hath performed what was undertaken by Him.

The second ground, is, *And hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation*. In this there is a very sum of the Gospel and Work of Redemption, and it is the more particular application of the former ground, and the effect thereof, as was said; and this inforceth the former reason. We have reason (say they) to praise Thee for Thy death; for, by it, we that were lost and sold under sin, are redeemed unto God, &c. To consider the words more particularly, we must follow the similitude of Redemption, as it is used amongst men, and in this case is made use of to help us to understand somewhat of this great myserie of the Gospel. And here is implied, 1. That God had a peculiar right to these that praise in this song, before ever they came to be sold or morgaged; So, to redeem a thing amongst men, supponeth a man once to have had a right to such a thing: here, we take Gods right to these redeemed, not only to be that interest which He had in them by Creation, for that is common; but that which He had from Eternity by His purpose and decree of Election: in which respect, the Elect are called *His* singularly, and *Joh. 17. vers. 6: Thine they were, and thou gavest them to me, &c.* where these that were Elected and given to Christ, are in a peculiar manner said to be Gods; and this is implied in the phraise, *Thou hast redeemed us to God*: for, it supponeth, that by Christs purchase, as it were, access is made for them again to be the Lords possession, according to His former right. 2. Here is implied, that even these to whom God had this peculiar right, are before this Redemption someway morgaged, or, as we use to say, woddet; and yet so as the former right was not fully dissolved: for, if there had not been some morgageing and alienation, there had been no need of Redemption; and if there had been a totall dissolution of the former right, there had been no access to redeem. This morgageing in Scripture, is clearly expressed to be that spiritual bondage under the Law, wrath, and curse of God, whereby even the Elect by their sins have intralled themselves; and because of that, are lying under the curse of God till He be satisfied, and His honour repared, which suffered by their sin: this is largely expressed, *Rom. 3. Ephes. 2. and Gal. 3.* beside many other places. The tye which notwithstanding stands betwixt the Lord and these, is, that purpose of election; (for even then in that respect they are His, as was said) for, Election being founded on nothing in the Creature but on Gods free will; purpose and good pleasure, there can nothing in the Creature dissolve the same. 3. Here is implied, that before these Elect can be freed from the curse, there must be

a price laid down, as it were, in compensation for the same: this is clearly implied in the word *Redemption*, which importeth some equivalent satisfaction given to the party offended, or to the party for whose behoove such persons were justly morgaged; and without whose prejudice they could not be set free, except an equivalent price were payed; and this is called Redemption. Now, the party offended, for the vindication of whose honour the Elect for a time are imprisoned, and put under the keeping of the Law, &c. is the Lord; and therefore in reason ere they can be freed, there must be some equivalent price for His satisfaction, which may glorifie Him, and vindicate His honour as much as the keeping of them in prison or under the former morgage; and this is called satisfaction or Redemption. 4. The scope of this Redemption, is expressed in that word, *Thou hast redeemed us to God*, that is, that the Elect may be admitted unto Gods friendship and favour, and communion with Him, and to the enjoying of the title that stands betwixt Him and them, as freely as if they had never had sin, or had never been under such a morgage. 5. They expresse who this Redeemer is; *THOU hast redeemed us: O blessed Thou.* This cannot indeed but affect; *Thou* the Lamb; *Thou*, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah; *Thou*, the Son of God, that hath eyes like a flame of fire, &c. *Thou* hast redeemed us. Christ is called a Redeemer; because when the Elect had nothing to free themselves from the captivity and morgage which they had brought upon themselves, when the Justice of God, by vertue of the Law and Curse, (to say no more) did call for a satisfaction and price before they could be admitted to freedom, Then He undertook, and was content to pay what they were due, either in the same kind, or, in the equivalent, that so they, who were as a morgaged possession, detained from the right owner, might be restored freely to him again. 6. The price by which He redeemed them, is mentioned, *Thou hast redeemed us by thy blood*. It was wonderful that He who was such a Person, should be the Redeemer; But, O how wonderful, that He should perform this Redemption by laying down such a price as His own blood! And, in this we may see, First, That seeing the threatening against sin, includeth death; (*That day thou eats, thou shalt die*) So the Redeemer condescended to undergo death for satisfying that. Secondly, When it is said, *Thou hast redeemed us by Thy blood*, there is imported a testimony of the singularity of His worth, and also of His love: for, no blood of goats, nay, nor of men, nor of meer creatures could make this Redemption, (for, no man can redeem his Brother, *Psal. 49.* so precious is the Redemption of Souls, that it ceaseth for ever, to wit, in respect of created redeemers) yet, then *Thou* condescended to do it, even with *Thy blood*, which (*Act. 20. 28.*) is *the blood of God*. Thirdly, This redeeming by His blood, doth expresse His death to be purposely, and formally laid down by Him, and accepted of by God, as a price and satisfaction in the room of these Elect, for the obtaining of their Redemption: otherwise, the whole strain of this scripture will be to no purpose, except Christ be acknowledged to be the Redeemer, and His blood and sufferings to be the price which is laid down as a satisfaction to Gods Justice in the room of the Elect sinners, that thereby they may be set free. And Christs blood in this respect, is said to be a satisfaction equivalent before Justice, because, by His undertaking that debt, and submitting to pay the same, and Gods actual exacting it of Him, the Holinesse and spotlesse Justice of God, is more gloriously manifested; than if these themselves had been kept still in the prison, who were yet never able to have paid one farthing, whereas now the Redeemer hath paid to the uttermost. 7. There is here the object of this Redemption, to wit, *us; Thou hast redeemed us*; and these are (to say so) two wayes qualified; 1. In respect of the extent of this object; it



is not some of one Family, City, Nation, or Kindred, &c. but it is extended to every kindred, tongue, people, and nation. And this it seemeth is done, to shew the universality (to say so) and extent of Christs Church under the Gospel, in opposition to what it was under the Law and formerly. Now say they the Church is not included within one Family, or Nation; but the Gospel being spread, the Elect are gathered in out of all Nations, Kindreds, and Tongues; and we, who are not of the flock of Abraham, but are of strange Nations, have reason to praise for this Gospel, and to bless the Mediator who hath purchased it unto us. Again, although this object in some respect hath been extended to all Nations, Kindreds, &c. without distinction or discrimination, Yet somewhat is added to qualifie and restrict the same, that it may not be understood collectively of all of every Nation, Language, &c. but distributively of some of these Nations, Kindreds, and Tongues: for, the redeemed, their Song is expressed in these terms, *Thou hast redeemed us out of every tongue, and kindred, and people, and nation.* And certainly, there is a palpable difference between these two, to wit, to say, Thou hast redeemed all Kindreds, Tongues, and Nations; and to say, Thou hast redeemed us out of every Tongue, Kindred, and Nation, whereby the redeemed are contradistinguished from the rest of the Kindred, Tongue, and Nation, out of which they are redeemed; and yet it cannot be thought, but that all who are redeemed, do concur in this Song: therefore the other, contradistinguished from them, cannot be said to be redeemed. Beside, this peculiarity of Redemption is a special ground of the redeemeds praise, to wit, when they were lying under the curse with others, Christ hath redeemed them from among them. Further, all this Song doth agree to any person that hath been redeemed by Christs blood, They that are redeemed are also made Kings, and Priests. And seeing all cannot praise for this mercy, as experience sheweth; therefore can it not be said, that they are comprehended under the former. And, if we will remember what was just now said, to wit, that Redemption doth import a peculiar right to these that are redeemed beside others, to wit, a right by Election: then it will follow, that no other can be said to be redeemed but the Elect that were given to Christ: and seeing all men are not Gods by this peculiar right (for, to be Gods in this respect, and to be given to Christ, and so to be actually redeemed, are of equal extent) therefore can it not be said that all are redeemed.

The third reason, or ground of their praise (which is also the effect of the former) will confirm this: and it is contained, *vers. 10. And hast made us unto our God Kings and Priests, and we shall reign upon earth:* So that if it be asked, what are the advantages which they reap by Christs Redemption, which make them thus to praise? They answer, they are very great, for, not only are they freed from the former bondage they were under, and set at liberty, as in the former *vers.* but they are honoured and blessed with many excellent privileges, exceedingly commended in four words, 1. Thou hast made us Kings; this respecteth that spiritual freedom that the believers have from their former enemies, and that spiritual dominion which they have over them, and that eternal glory whereof they shall be partakers when they shall sit upon one throne with the Lord Christ. This is a great privilege, that all the redeemed who were formerly slaves, shall be made Kings. 2. They are made Priests; this was also a title and office of great dignity under the Law, and by it is signified, that by Christ Jesus all the redeemed are honoured to have access unto God with boldness, and to offer up their own prayers and praises unto God by Him, with hope of being accepted: which privilege is founded upon Christs Redemption, and without this there had been access to no sinner to pray or praise acceptably and with any comfort before God. But now (say they) we are

Priests and may offer our own sacrifices; yea, now under the Gospel, we are not tied to any typical service, nor to one place or temple, nor to seek a Priest to offer our sacrifices unto God for us, but we our selves may approach therewith unto him. 3. It commendeth and sweeteneth this privilege, that they are made Priests to our God; which implyeth that now by Christs purchase they may worship and serve God as in Covenant with them, and as their own God: which doth make all the services they can be put to, very light and easie, and strengthens them against all the difficulties they may meet with therein, seeing it is no idol, nor strange God, whom they worship, but their own God, who will pify them in their service, as a Father pitheth his Son. Lastly, They say, *and we shall reign upon earth;* which is set down, not only to shew the spiritualness of this Kingdom, which being on earth, and common to all the redeemed (many of whom have a poor being here) can be no other wayes understood than of his spiritual Dominion; but mainly, we conceive, it is mentioned here, as the ground of their Song, that not only have they a hope of reigning, and being freed from sin in heaven; but that, in some measure, they are made partakers of the vertue of Christs purchase in the subduing of their sin, & the mortifying of their lusts, whereby they are kepted from the dominion of sin, because they are not now under the Law, but under Grace, according to the promise, *Rom. 6. 14.* and this is a kindly evidence of a redeemed person, and a convincing ground of praise to a truly gracious soul, to wit, to have Sanctification thriving, the body of death born down, and even before they come to heaven, to be looking heaven like, and to be brought some way to triumph over their spiritual enemies; than which, as there is nothing that will be more desired by them, so there will be nothing more acceptable to them, even thus to be privileged and dignified, to reign spiritually on the earth. And we may see, that as this is a great mercy to be sanctified, so it is a fruit of Christs death, and floweth from His purchase, even as Justification doth: in which respect, He is our sanctification, as well as our Righteousness, *1 Cor. 1. 31.*

The second company who joyn in this Song, is, the Angels: who are described, *vers. 11.* and then their Song is expressed, *vers. 12.* They are described, First, by their title and number, they are Angels, that is, glorious ministering spirits, *Heb. 1. 14.* called sometimes in Scripture the host of Heaven; and because of their excellency, the Sons of God, *Job 38. 7.* And they are many Angels, *The number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;* this is a great number, it seemeth to be taken out of *Dan. 7. 10.* where thousand thousands are said to Minister unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousands to stand before him; yet the expression is but put for an indefinite, to shew the innumerable company of glorious and mighty Angels which the Lord hath waiting on Him, as servants and ministers to do his pleasure in any part of the world, as it is, *Psal. 103. 21.* The scope is, to shew how glorious he must be who is thus waited upon. Secondly, The place where they are seen, is observed, *they are round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders:* by which, it seemeth they have the outmost rank of all the attendants that (*Chap. 4. vers. 4, 5, &c.*) are mentioned, and said to wait upon this Throne; and we may conceive it thus, upon this Throne is the Majesty of God, of which dignity the Lamb, and the seven spirits, are also said to partake, *vers. 6.* next unto them are the four beasts, or ministers upon the several corners of the Throne; then are the four and twenty Elders, or the Professors, round about the Throne; and again, about them are the hosts of the Angels, as is expressly asserted here. This is not to set forth the prerogative of the Church militant beyond Angels simply, or, as if Angels were at a greater distance from God than they; for, it is the great privilege of Saints glorified, to be like Angels, and

and to have a place among them that stand by: but, this sheweth the infirmities and difficulties which the Saints Militant are subject to, and the Lords tenderness and carefulness of them, who hath his hosts of Angels encompassing them for their defence and protection, according to the Word, *Psalm 34. 7. The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.* There is no mention here neither of the sea of glass, nor of the seven spirits, spoken of, *Chap. 4. ver. 5, and 6.* The reason is, as we suppose, because by them is understood the same that is expressed by the Lamb slain, with seven horns and seven eyes, *vers. 6.* of this Chapter. And however, considering that the sea of glass hath the same place with the seven spirits of God, to wit, before the Throne, and so betwixt the Throne and the Elders; We cannot conceive of either of these, but they must be within this guard of Angels, even as the rest are. And so it is comfortable that the people of God have no less Guard and Army waiting upon them, than the Lord hath Angels waiting upon him, they being all of them ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be Heirs of salvation.

Their song followeth, *verse 12.* they say with a loud voice, *worthy is the Lamb that was slain, &c.* That this is done with a loud voice, it sheweth their seriousness and affectionateness in this work: what they ascribe to him, is, upon the matter, what was ascribed to him by the redeemed, *vers. 9.* and what was ascribed to God, *chap. 4. vers. 11.* It is, first, in the general, an expression of his worth, *Worthy is the Lamb, &c.* Which is their putting to their seal to the acknowledgement of his worth, and carrieth also, as implied in it, an acknowledgement of their being unfuteable to express what was due to him: and therefore the expression, is, *He is worthy to receive power, &c.* which doth insinuate, that the work is beyond them, as was observed, *chap. 4. 11.* And when Angels are at a stand in the Mediators praise, what must be our unfutableness in expressing of the same? Then in the second place, they mention many things which are His due, in seven comprehensive words, 1. *Power*, because he is furnished with Authority, and Commission, ample and large for the discharge of his Offices; in which respect, *John 17. 2.* he is said to have Power given him over all flesh. 2. *Riches*, that is, a Royal possession, because he made himself poor to purchase a seed to himself by a great price. 3. *Wisdom*, because he hath dealt prudently in the executing of his Office, as, *Isai. 52. 13.* and with great Wisdom doth he manage the trust committed to him. 4. *Strength*, because he hath bound the strong man, and carried away the prize, spoiling principalities and powers in making a shew of them openly, *Colos. chap. 2. ver. 15.* 5. *Honour*, this respecteth the Glory and Majesty of his place, who, being made head over all things, ought so to be honoured by them. 6. *Glory*, that is, the acknowledgement of the Excellency and Majesty of his person with the dignity and preheminnence of his Office, and doth import also his being God, to whom only Glory is due. The seventh word, is, *Blessing*, this looketh to the many advantages that come by him: so that when hearts can do more, they bless him; which implyeth, not only an acknowledgement of his being blessed, but also the ardent desire that they have to have him so, as in all the former words respectively. By all these put together, is understood, that every thing which may contribute to set forth a person to be glorious, and to make him to be acknowledged such, is in the Mediator.

If it be asked, How the Angels come in to praise the Mediator upon this consideration of his being slain, as is expressed in the song? *Answer.* This is done, not as if they were equally sharers in the benefits of Redemption with the redeemed: for the Elect Angels being never under sin, nor at a distance with God, cannot be said to be reconciled by Christs death; therefore we will find, that though both mention him as slain in the song,

yet there are these differences, 1. The redeemed do expressly acknowledge this benefit of Redemption to come by his Blood, and do derive their privileges of being Kings, and Priests, &c. from that, as the meritorious cause, which is not to be found in the song of the Angels. Secondly, When the redeemed mention Christs death and purchase, they look on it as intended for them; and therefore do apply the same in the song, as claiming a special interest therein, and acknowledging a special obligation to lye upon them beyond others because of the same. And therefore they say, *who hath redeemed us by Thy blood, &c.* whereas the song of the Angels is more general. It appeareth then, that though they agree in giving praise to the same object, to wit, the Lamb, yet they differ in respect of the particular grounds on which they proceed. The grounds then of the Angels praise, may be conceived, 1. To be the excellency of our Lord Jesus his Person and Office, and the wonderful glory of Grace, Love, Goodness, &c. that kyths especially in his humiliation and sufferings. And it may be justly looked on as admirable and praise-worthy, even to Angels, to see God manifested in the flesh, as it is, *1 Timothy Chapter 3. verse 16.* and yet more, that he was content to die for satisfying the Justice of God, and vindicating of his Glory. 2. Although Angels cannot be said to have reconciliation by him, yet according to the judgement of many worthy men, they have confirmation through him, in which respect to them, He, as Mediator, is head of the elect Angels. And though we will not enter upon this particularly; yet, we suppose that there is great accession to the joy of the elect Angels by Christs incarnation and suffering, as having thereby a more clear discovery of the Glory, Majesty, and Goodness of God, so that in this respect he is said to be seen of them, *1 Tim. 3. 16.* and thereby they discern his manifold wisdom in the way of the Gospel, as it is, *Eph. 3. 10.* for which cause, they sing at his birth, *Luke 2. 13.* as, being glad to be the declarers of such glad tidings: And, no question, many other wayes they are in this delighted and rejoyced, and so have good ground to praise. 3. This suffering of Christs and his Redemption, bringeth with it the Salvation of the lost Elect who are many; and their Salvation being a thing that glorifieth God, and relieveth such as have been loved of him from Eternal wo, it cannot but be delightful to them; for, even the Elect Angels have a kind of sympathy with Elect sinners who are given to Christ, for which cause they are said to have joy over a repenting sinner, *Luke 15. 7.* and *10.* and therefore they may be conceived to praise upon the account of Christs dying, because that redoundeth so much to the good of the Church. 4. Christ by his death, hath obtained a Name, even above principalities and powers, unto which God hath highly exalted him, *Phil. 2. 9, &c.* for which cause, it is said, *Heb. 1. 6.* when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, let all the Angels of God worship him. So that in praising him that was slain, they give obedience to Gods Ordinance in adoring him who is the Son of God, and who by his death hath not lost any thing of the Glory due to him, but thereby hath declared himself to be worthy of the same: and therefore it is particularly worthy to be mentioned to his commendation.

The third company that praise, *vers. 13.* is, *Every creature which is in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, &c.* This looketh to the reasonless creatures that are contradistinguished from the redeemed and from the Angels, called sometimes the whole Creation, which by sin is made subject to vanity, and is said to groan under the same, *Rom. 8. 20, 21, 22.* These are brought in, not as if formally they could express praise; But, 1. to shew the gloriousness of this Object to whom praise is due. It will be a task and employment to all creatures to praise him. 2. It sheweth some advantage, that by Christs death sometime is to redound to them



them, when they shall be freed from the bondage of corruption and brought unto the glorious liberty of the Children of God, *Rom. 8. 21.* In reference to which, it is said, they *groan and travell*, as desirous of this change, *ver. 22.* and according to this, they may be said to praise here as they groan there. The words wherein they express their praise, are four, to wit, *bleſſing, honour, glory, and power*, which were formerly spoken of. There is some difference in the object of their praise, as to the expression thereof, from these who went before; for, *they ascribe it to him that sitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever*, whereas the Lamb only was mentioned formerly. Yet indeed there is no difference: for, when the Lamb is mentioned, who is Mediator, God that sitteth upon the Throne is understood as dwelling in him. And by this we may see 1. That the Glory and Worship which is given to the Lamb here, is Divine, and Supream, because its that same which is given to him that sitteth upon the Throne. 2. We may see, that it is the same worship, and that, whether God or the Mediator be expressed, they are both worshipped in the same act: for, it cannot be said that this is any other worship than what the redeemed or Angels gave in the former verses; nor that there is any different object worshipped here, seeing that it is the same worship which is ascribed in all the songs. Neither will any think that he that sitteth upon the Throne, was less worshipped in the song of the redeemed, and of the Angels, where he was not formally mentioned, than in this. If any say that the Lamb is said to be worthy to receive glory, &c. which supponeth this to be a communicated glory? *Ans.* We may see the inconsequency of this, by considering what is said of him that sitteth upon the throne, *Chapter 4. vers. 11.* and we may acquiesce in the interpretation thereof that is given.

In the last place, when all the creatures have done, the redeemed again come in, *vers. 14.* and they close this song; because their interest is most, and their engagements deepest. 1. The four beasts say *Amen*: thus the Ministers begin. What they say, is in this word *Amen*, which is a word that usually closeth Prayer, and doth import some clearness of Faith and confidence in the thing asserted, and some vehement desire of attaining the thing prayed-for. Here it is set down as the expression of hearts, who are indeed passionately desirous to have the Lords praise glorious, and yet convinced to be utterly insufficient for the same, and therefore they close in a manner when they begin, and they are beginning when they close. And all is but rather an assenting to the glory that is given, and an acknowledging that all is due to him, than a real performing of anything in their own estimation. In the last place, the four and twenty elders follow, and they have nothing to say, but *fall down and worship him that liveth for ever and ever*; the beasts say not much, they express nothing, but fall down silent, as being overcome and infinitely outreached by the glorious and incomprehensible excellency of the blessed object; yet, is their praise no less acceptable to God than if there were many expressions: because silence, both in Prayer and Praise, doth

often speak more and louder than great noise of words. And here we see, that where the heart is inwardly weighted with the convictions of Gods goodness and ones own need, and benedicted with love, or overwhelmed in a manner with holy fear and reverence that it can express nothing; yet, even then there may be an acceptable worshipping of God. Yea, this silence is marked as the yondmost step, or greatest length of praise that they did, or could attain unto.

*Observe, 1.* That in our Lord Jesus, and in the execution of his Offices, there is much ground of praise, so much as may take up all creatures, and an infinite deal more; and it should be the task of all creatures in heaven and earth to be setting forth his praise: all of these companies say, *worthy is the Lamb, &c.* It is a wonder, when this is their task, that so few are taken up with it. From the occasion, *Observe 2.* That the opening of this Revelation, is a ground of praise. 3. That many excellent things come by Christs purchase to the Redeemed. These cannot be soon numbered. O, what are they beholden to him! *Observe 4.* That it is praise to Jesus Christ, and it is even almost all that Believers come to, in the work of praise, to be telling over, to his commendation, what he hath done. *Observe 5.* The Faith of interest in our Lord Jesus his purchase, is the most kindly motive, to make folks bless and praise him, that is, when they can say, *Thou hast redeemed us.* *Observe 6.* That as it is a life that hath many rich advantages, so there is no such heartsome life in all the World, as to be among the Redeemed; they have an un-interrupted song, and will continue to have it when all others will howl. *Obf. 7.* From Christs taking the Book and opening of it; from his doing this, and the Redeemed their praise. *Observe*, Christ doth all, we enjoy all, and therefore should praise for all; It is an easie task that the Redeemed have in respect of that which Christ had. *Observe 8.* There is a sweet consent here, no different note, they have all one Song, no different Opinion, no contradiction, no divided Praise, nor Prayers, nor Fasts, no separating in this worship of one of the Redeemed from another, all concur, which is not one of the least advantages, once they will all meet and sweetly agree together. *Observe 9.* It is but a mint, at the best that the Saints make at the Lambs praise: their praise is but a beginning to it, an assent to the work, or a conviction of their duty: when they begin, they say only, *He is worthy to have it*; and when they have undertaken, they must sing, *who can shew forth all thy praise?* *Psal. 106.* Therefore here, *Amen*, is the first word, and they fall down silent; praise overmastereth them, it is the greatest duty: and these that praise till they think they have done enough, they understand it not, it is right in this respect to leave it as we begin. *Observe 10.* All their song is, *Worthy, worthy is the Lamb*, as if they said, if we could praise Thee, Thou art worthy to have it, and that is all we can attain to, to acknowledge praise is thy due. *Observe*, When folks have gone their yondmost in the matter of praise, it is rather to say and think it should be, than any way to rest as though it were. The reason is, because God, who is to be praised, is far above all blessing and possible praise, *Neh. 9. 5.*

### Concerning the nature of CHRIST S death, or if it be properly a Satisfaction.

BESIDE what Observations have been already hinted at and held forth from this Chapter, there are two more; which being clear of themselves from the words, and contributing much to the clearing of two concerning truths, in these dayes not a little controverted; we may insist a little more in speaking to them as the place giveth ground. The one is, concerning the nature, the other is, concerning the extent of the merit of Christs death. The first observation is, That Christs death and sufferings are properly a price and satisfaction for

sin, and were purposely offered unto the Justice of God as such. So that when the Majesty of God (to say so) was wronged by the sin of man, and when (at least, by the necessity flowing from the established Law and Curse) there behoved to be a satisfaction to Justice, before any sinner could be freed from the sentence, then our Lord Jesus did offer Himself to suffer in the room of the Elect for the satisfying of Justice; which accordingly was afterward performed by him, and, upon that account, accepted by God. The scope of this Doctrine, is, to shew, first,

first, That not only Christs death and sufferings were for the confirmation of the Doctrine he preached: Nor yet, in the second place, only to give thereby a pattern of obedience to us; for, these two may be, and are in the death and sufferings of many Martyrs; and to attribute no more to the death of Christ, is blasphemous: Nor, in the third place, only to procure to Himself this prerogative of forgiving sinners their sins freely: for, Christ, being God, had power with the Father to forgive sins before his becoming man: and even this pretended end, doth imply Christs death to be a price for making of a purchase, seeing it supponeth, that he, by honouring God, and doing what was pleasant to him, did procure this privilege to forgive others freely; which certainly doth imply, that these sufferings of His had a meritorious and satisfying vertue before God. But these ends of the Socinians, being such as destroy the God-head and personality of our Lord Jesus, as the second person of the Trinity; and being purposely moulded for the supporting of that blasphemy, We need not stand much upon the disproving of them; but we say, beyond these our Lord Jesus his death was purposely intended by him, and actually accepted by JEHOVAH as a proper price and satisfaction.

To clear this a little, when we speak of *Satisfaction*, these things shortly are intended. First, That as a man had made himself liable to the curse for provoking of God, and (to speak after the manner of men, as most of all this must be understood) thereby had wronged the Majesty of God, by daring to disobey Him and to slight his Authority; so there is in Christs taking on of that debt, and humbling of himself to suffer for the same, a proportionableness and an equivalency for the vindicating of the Glory, of the Holiness, Justice, and Sovereignty of God, and to make these shine more, than if the sinners had been actually put-at for satisfying in their own persons: for that the Father  *fellow-equal, and only begotten Son* should humble himself and become man, and in that nature suffer; and that the Majesty of GOD should make his Sword awake against him, and smite him, &c. doth much more abundantly declare and set forth the Justice of God, that will prosecute his threatnings, and his Sovereignty and Authority, in that he is obeyed and submitted unto, by such an excellent person, as his only begotten Son, than if either man had not sinned, or he who is but a wretched creature should have been casten into hell: for by this, Justice had never been satisfied, nor had the Authority of God been manifested by such a glorious instance as the obedience of the Man Christ Jesus. So that we are to conceive of *satisfaction*, in this matter, as that word useth to be understood amongst men, that is, when an injured, or wronged person, is appealed and satisfied in reference to the party that hath done him injury, by the intervening recompence and satisfaction of some other, purposely, by such an equivalent compensation, intending the same. Secondly, When we speak of satisfaction in this case, it doth respect Gods purpose and intention in designing the death and sufferings of the Mediator for this very end in the Covenant of Redemption: so that when there was no imaginable satisfaction to be expected from creatures, whereby there might be a vindication of Gods Justice, that so way might be made to pardon Elect sinners; for this very end, a Body was designed and prepared for the Mediator, and as it is *Isaiah chap. 53. ver. 6. The Lord laid upon him the iniquities of us all*, and in his counsel and decree, did appoint him, who knew no sin, to become sin for others, and thereby as a Cautioner to be liable to their debt. Thirdly, This also is intended, that the Mediator, in his accepting of the offer, and in laying down of his life, did purposely intend thus to satisfy: for, when Sacrifices and burnt-offerings, &c. could not please God, nor satisfy him in this respect, then did the Son willingly undertake *with delight to do Gods will*, as it is, *Psalms 40. 6, 7, &c.* And it is on this ground, that Christ is called the *Cautioner*,

*Heb. 7. 22.* because he undertook the satisfying for our debt: and upon this ground, was there access in Justice to exact it of him, though he himself knew no sin. For which, see *Isaiah 53. 7*, and *10. 2 Corinth. 5. 21*. In the fourth place, this is included, That by the Lord JEHOVAH, the offended party, this death and willing suffering of our blessed Lord Jesus, was actually accepted, as satisfactory and well-pleasing to him, in the room and stead of these who had offended, so that thereby He, in the order agreed upon, doth lay by quarrels at the offending party, as men do discharge the principal Creditor the debt, when the Cautioner hath satisfied in his name. Hence the Lord pronounceth often, that in his beloved son he is well pleased, and that he hath found a ransom, *Job 33. 24.* and from this it is, that his death is called a propitiation, as being acceptable to God, when other Sacrifices could not be. That in these respects Christs death is truly a satisfaction for sin, may from this Text thus be made out:

First, If by Christs death we be redeemed, and if the effect flowing from his death be a *Redemption*, then is his Death (under which all his sufferings are comprehended) a proper price and satisfaction for sin; But the former is true, Therefore, &c. There is a double strength in this Argument to make out the Connexion, first, in the word *Redemption*: Which, (as we shew in the exposition) beside other things, doth imply, 1. That sinners by sin are sold and mor-gaged, and the Law, and Curse have obtained a right over them. 2. That, at least, in respect of that established Law and Curse (*that day thou eatest, thou shalt die*) there was no dissolving of that right, but by some intervening satisfaction: otherwise the Lord, who pronounced it, might be thought not to be just and true in His threatnings. 3. This is implied, that when men and creatures could give no price, our Lord Jesus did actually undertake, and accordingly did pay, therefore it is a *Redemption*, because it is a freedom that was bought; and he is a Redeemer, because he did buy it, and satisfy for it: and this expression, being borrowed from the manner of men, will infer no less, as is said. The second part of the strength of the Argument, is in this, That this Redemption is attributed to his *death and blood*, *Thou hast redeemed us by thy blood*; and these, put together, make it exceeding strong: for, the very price of the Redemption is thereby clearly held forth. So, if it be asked, Why is Christ called a Redeemer? *Answer.* Because he redeemed us. If again it be said, wherewith did he redeem us, or, with what price? It is answered, with his blood; and indeed there can be no other reason why so frequently our Redemption is attributed to his death, but because his death cometh-in in a peculiar respect thereunto; so that when we (as once *Isaac* was to his father) were lying obnoxious to the stroke of Gods Justice, He offered himself in our room (as there was a Ram provided in the place of *Isaac*) that thereby we might escape, as it is, *2 Cor. 5. 21. Gal. 3. 13, 14.* he redeemed us from the curse, being himself *made a curse for us*; which must be understood, to be in our stead.

Secondly, (which is almost one with the last branch of the former) It is clear by this, that all the good that cometh to the Redeemed, is still reckoned as the effect and purchase of Christs suffering; which must respect the merit and efficacy of his blood, as by way of satisfaction procuring the same. And in this respect, it may be said singularly of the Mediator, the second Person of the God-head, that He hath procured this Redemption, otherwise than can be said of the first and third Person of the blessed Trinity. Therefore also we are said to be *loved by him*, and *washed by his own blood*, Chap. 1. 5. But of this Argument was spoken in the former.

Thirdly, This is brought as the Song of all the redeemed, and as that which will agree to all of them, when the Congregation of the first-born shall be brought together: now what other



other influence can the blood of Christ have upon these who were redeemed by Him, from the foundation of the world, and before His death, when the example thereof could have no effect, or upon young ones, upon whom His sufferings can have no moral influence by opening or confirming to them Doctrinally the way to Heaven? and yet, both these may well be capable of the efficacy thereof, as it is considered as a satisfaction: now, considering that all the redeemed, are equally, and in the same respects, obliged to Christs death for their life, and for that cause do jointly concur in the same Song of praise; we must either say, that none such as have been formerly instanced, are saved; or, we must say, that they are all saved without any respect to His sufferings: both which, are false and absurd: or, lastly, we must acquiesce in this, That by Christs sufferings, as by a satisfaction, this was procured to them; and therefore consequently, that His death is to be considered as such, seeing no otherwise it can have influence on their Redemption. And there being but one Redemption, and one way by which it is procured, to wit, Christs death; and one Song, comprehending the acknowledgement of all the redeemed; and seeing to some, it must be a satisfaction: Therefore it must be esteemed to be so, in reference to all others also, who are, or shall be partakers thereof.

Fourthly, This fruit of His death, to wit, *Redemption*, is peculiar to some of all Kindreds, and Nations, and is not common to all. It must therefore be considered as flowing from His death, as a satisfaction meritoriously procuring the same: otherwise, these effects, which may follow upon His confirming His Doctrine by His death, giving an example to others, &c. are common indifferently to all that are hearers of the Gospel: for, in these respects He is so, and doth so to all. This therefore, being peculiar to some, (as the next Doctrine will further clear) must be understood as qualified by the Covenant of Redemption to be for the satisfying in the room of such and such, and not of others: which consideration doth plainly bring it to the notion of a satisfaction.

Fifthly, There is a special emphasis and significancy in this, that *Thou* hast redeemed us by *Thy blood*, &c. which doth respect the excellency of the Person who did lay down His blood for making of this purchase. It is *Thou*, who art the first and last, who was dead, and is alive, and liveth for ever, who art the Son of God; yea, who art God, *Act. 20. 28.* as was more fully cleared, *Chap. 1. 4.* for, *Thou* and *Thy*, relate to the Person described by such titles in the former part of this Prophecy. This doth give ground for this Argument, If the purchase made by the blood of Jesus Christ be such as could be made by none, but by the blood of Him who was, and is God, Then His death and sufferings for that end, must be a satisfaction, and by their merit and efficacy procure the Redemption purchased; But the former is true. Therefore, &c. The reasons of the consequence, are, because, First, all the other ends of suffering may be in the sufferings of a meer man. Secondly, There were not need of such an excellent price, if the merit and worth thereof did not concur, by way of satisfaction, for obtaining of this Redemption. Thirdly, This respect to the excellency of the Person, sheweth where-from mainly their Redemption doth flow, to wit, that the Person dying, was of such worth; and that therefore His death and sufferings are accounted of great price before God. And lastly, There is here a clear opposition, *Thou* hast redeemed us by *Thy blood*, that is, *Thou*, who art God, hast condescended to lay down *Thy* life, and shed *Thy* blood for us who were of little worth: which doth import, that His sufferings were estimated in the stead of what should have been otherways exacted from them.

These Arguments will be the more clear, if we consider that opposition which is made by the Apostle. *Rom. 5.* betwixt our

blessed Lord Jesus, the second *Adam*, and the first *Adam*, of whom men have their sinful being: for, in that comparison and opposition, Christ is not only made the Author of life to these that are by Faith His seed, as the first *Adam* was the author of death to these that descend from him; but also and especially in this, that as by the disobedience and transgression of *Adam*, death was brought upon his Posterity, as being procured by the guilt and demerite (to speak so) of that offence; So by the obedience, Righteousness and sufferings of the other, life and freedom from the dominion of sin is purchased, and that by way of merit and satisfaction equivalent to the former offence. For, as by *Adams* fall, the Holiness and Justice of God were wronged, So by the obedience of the second *Adam*, they were wonderfully made to shine. And this being the Apostles scope, to compare these two *Adams* together, both in respect of the opposite effects that flow from them to their seed, and in respect of the opposite means by which these are procured, This which is asserted must necessarily follow.

It is also observable, and doth exceedingly confirm the truth laid down, and discover the horridness of the opposite blasphemy, that the denying of Christs death to be a satisfaction, and the denying of His blessed God-head, are so knit together, that the asserting of the one, doth infer the other. Therefore these wretched *Socinians*, who deny the eternal God-head, and the personality of the second person of the God-head, must also deny the merit and excellency of His obedience in His death, without which it could not be a satisfaction. But, on the contrary, the redeemed, who have the right thoughts of Christs God-head, have also this impression of His death, that it is a satisfaction laid down in their name; upon both which grounds, they praise in this Song, to wit, that so excellent a Person should redeem them by so excellent a price as the blood of God: and this doth demonstrate their engagement to Him, that when (upon supposition of the threatened curse, at least) there was no other that could undertake their debt, or satisfy for them, but He who was God, That even then He, who was the Son of God, did undertake the same. We are persuaded, that all who ever shall share in this Song, shall acknowledge both these truths, and heartily bless the Son of God for making satisfaction by His blood. And considering that the Abbettors of this blasphemy do by this deny the God-head of our blessed Lords Person, and altogether make void the efficacy of His Sacrifice and Priestly office, so that neither His Person nor His Offices are acknowledged by them, which yet are the two great and solid foundations of Christianity, Therefore they are not worthy to be disputed with, nor accounted Christians; but rather to be joyned with, and reckoned among, Heathens, or the followers of *Mahomet* and the receivers of His Alcaron. For which cause, Christians would guard against this most horrid Error, as being most blasphemous against the Mediator, and most destructive to their own Salvation; for, by these grounds, they can neither have a Redeemer, nor a Redemption. It is reported of *Socinus*, (the great Patron of this blasphemy, by a Learned man, to wit, *Cameron*, who writeth that he had it from one of his disciples) that he privately denied the world to be made of nothing, lest thereby he should be necessitated to acknowledge the infiniteness of Gods power; which afterward was more publickly avowed and contended-for by some of his followers. What horrible things are there, that mens corruptions will not conceive and foster? and what height or depth will not the devil drive men to, where he getteth liberty? These things have ever been abhorred as most detestable, even as to the very mentioning of them; yet this horrid blasphemy wanteth not its Patrons in this spring-time of Error: And therefore men ought to walk the more circumspectly in reference to the same.

*Concerning the extent of the merit of CHRIST'S death, or, if it may be accounted a satisfaction for all men.*

**T**He second Doctrine that we propose from the words, is, That though the death and sufferings of Christ, be properly a satisfaction to the Justice of God for sin; yet is not this intended by Christ, nor accepted of by God as a price and satisfaction for the sins of all men, and for the procuring of Redemption to them, but only for some peculiarly chosen of God, and by His decree of Election separated from others.

It is true, that Christ's death, being considered abstractly and materially in it self, in respect of the Person who died, and in respect of the manner of His performing this obedience with so much cheerfulness, reverence, &c. may be, and by Divines is said to be, of an infinite value; So that if it had been so intended and transacted in the Covenant of Redemption, it might have been in the former respects accounted, and accepted as a price for many more; yea, for all: because, such suffering, performed by such a Person, is equivalent unto, and, in respect of His excellency who suffers, beyond the eternal sufferings of all meer creatures. But Christ's death, being considered formally, as a price and satisfaction, with respect to the transaction that is made in the Covenant of Redemption, it must be qualified and understood with respect to the Lords proposing of the terms, the Mediators condescending thereto, and His intention in undertaking and executing the same, as also with respect to the Lords accepting of the same as such. Therefore it is not to be enquired here, what Christ's death is in it self abstractly? nor what it might have been, if the Sovereign Lord had so thought good? but it is to be enquired, if the Lords purpose in giving of His Son to die, and the sons in obeying the same, was, to have that death, and these sufferings laid down as a price and satisfaction for all? We say, that in that respect, it was neither intended by the Son, nor accepted by God as a satisfaction for all, but allanerly for such as He had chosen, and by His purpose had separated to Himself out of all kindreds, tongues and nations: which by several Arguments may be strongly concluded from this place.

*Arg. 1.* Christ's death and sufferings were not intended as a price and satisfaction to buy or redeem any, but such as were proposed by God to the Mediator in the Covenant of Redemption to be redeemed by Him; But all and every one were not so proposed. Therefore Christ's death and sufferings were not intended as a price and satisfaction to redeem all and every one. The *major* of this Argument, doth not only appear, at the first, to be very reasonable, but doth necessarily flow even from the emphasis of this word *redeeming*: Which doth suppose, First, That man, being under a kindly relation to God, did by sin fall from the same. Secondly, It supponeth, that man, by sin, is made obnoxious to Gods curse, and also that he is unable to extricate or expedite himself therefrom. Thirdly, It supponeth the Lords condescending to think of the redeeming of some from that curse; and for that end, to propose and accept of such a satisfaction, for such persons, and on such terms as himself should propose, or had proposed: and therefore any Redemption doth first presuppose the Lords condescending to admit of such a bargain in the general; and it being an act of His Sovereignty, there can be no other rule but His good pleasure, whereby either the persons to be redeemed, or the terms upon which, or the time when, such a satisfaction is to be made for such persons, &c. are to be regulated: we must therefore look to his proposing of the same as the foundation whereby all that followeth is to be squared: for, this phrase *redeeming*, being borrowed from the manner of men, doth hold forth the Lord upon the one side, as the party offended, making offer to

accept of such a satisfaction, for such offenders; and on the other side, It representeth the Mediator as the buyer and Redeemer, accepting of such an offer in all the circumstances thereof, to wit, to engage to be a Redeemer to such and such persons, to consent to lay down such and such a satisfaction and price for their Redemption, and to perform the same in the time and manner condescended upon by the Lord. And it is the conceiving of this great transaction of the Elects Redemption under this form, to wit, as having such an offer upon the one side, and such an acceptation upon the other, that makeeth it get the name of a *Covenant* in Scripture: because so it is represented as a mutual bargain, in the manner as bargains use to be transacted amongst men: which yet is done for the helping of us to understand this mystery, and is not beyond this scope to be extended. From all which, it doth appear, that the Fathers proposal (to say so) of His intention and purpose, must regulate this whole business of Redemption; and therefore must the extent of Christ's death, as it is a satisfaction, be understood according to the same. Hence, the Lord Christ, doth so frequently assert, *that he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him, and to finish his work, and to give eternal life to as many as God had given to him, and such like.* Whereby it is evident, that the Lord hath particularly ordered the work of Redemption according to His good pleasure in the respects formerly mentioned; and that the Mediators death and sufferings are to be looked upon as regulated and qualified in respect of their effects, according to what hath been proposed to Him. This first Proposition, we suppose, is now clear, and may be yet further confirmed: for, It cannot be said, that God intended to have any redeemed but these whom He did propose to the Mediator: Again, It cannot be said, that any were by Him intended to be redeemed, whom He did not thus propose in the Covenant of Redemption, and give unto the Mediator for that end: and, in the last place, it must be said; that all whom He did propose in that bargain of Redemption, were designed by Him actually to be redeemed: otherwise many absurd conclusions (reflecting upon the Lords serious manner of proceeding in that business, and upon His wise manner of contriving the same, as also upon His effectual way of bringing about what He hath intended) will follow; which without horreur cannot be imagined. Therefore it will follow, that the Sons actual bearing the iniquities of such as are redeemed, and the Fathers proposing of such and such to Him for that end, must be of equal extent.

Now as to the *minor* proposition of the Argument, It is certain, that all and every one were not proposed (much less all indifferently) by the Lord JEHOVAH to the Mediator, to be bought or redeemed by Him; And may be made to appear thus, 1. Because the Lord did never intend that all should be glorified and actually partake of Redemption, He having decreed the glorifying of His Justice on some, as the manifesting of His mercy upon others; and therefore it cannot be said that the Lord did intend such to be redeemed by the Son, or that he did, for that end, propose them to Him.

If it be said, that though He did not intend their Salvation, as He did intend the Salvation and Redemption of the Elect, Yet may it be said, that He did intend their Redemption conditionally, and so propose them to the Mediator to be redeemed on these terms, that is, if they should Believe. *Ans.* Of this we may afterward speak a word; Yet here, we say, 1. That this doth attribute to the only wise God a most derogating intension to



His own glory : for, It cannot be denied but He foreknew the event, and that such a conditional intention would not be sufficient to through the same : and to say, that He intended what He knew would never come to pass, or to apply such means as He knew could not be effectual to the end, cannot but with horror be thought upon. 2. We say, that the Scripture doth only mention one kind of proposing and giving to Christ, which is to be given absolutely to Him to be redeemed ; and the opposition betwixt this giving of some to Christ, and the not giving of others, is not as if it were betwixt two givings of diverse kinds, to wit, one conditional, and another absolute ; but it is such an opposition as is betwixt giving, and not giving, or passing by ; and therefore that former twofold giving, or proposing to Christ, cannot be admitted. 3. We say, if there be such a conditional proposing of the reprobate to Christ to be redeemed, It will not be easie to conceive the terms of the Covenant ; for, there is but one Covenant mentioned, wherein (to say so) the bargain with the Mediator is concluded : this will infer two, to wit, one, absolute in reference to the Elect ; an other, conditional in reference to the reprobate. Again, It will be difficult to determine whether Christ were to pay so much for them as for the Elect ; for, it seemeth not just that He should pay as much for these who are but conditionally redeemed, (and for whom He doth not purchase the condition, and whom He hath not intended to make partakers of the benefits) as for these who are absolutely redeemed, to whom the condition is purchased, and for whom the benefits are intended. On the other side, it will be difficult to say, that a less price is required for this conditional Redemption ; because so, It were no Redemption at all : for, if the Redemption must be at such a price, then what is less cannot procure the same. Further, there is but one Covenant of Redemption mentioned in Scripture ; and the Elect, or, these who were given to Christ and proposed to Him, are still mentioned as the object about which that bargain is transacted : we cannot therefore think of a conditional proposal, except we can see a distinct bargain and Covenant concerning the same ; which yet will be no Covenant of Redemption. But we may touch this afterward. Secondly, That all were not proposed to Christ, or, given to Him, will thus appear, because by these titles, to wit, *these that thou hast given me, &c.* such are contradistinguished from others, as, from these who are not given to Christ : neither can there be any other reason why these are designed by such a name, but that in Gods purpose they were designed peculiarly to be redeemed, and accordingly were committed to the Mediator, and undertaken for by Him in the Covenant of Redemption. Now, it cannot be said, that any other were proposed by God to the Mediator, but such as were thus given to Him ; and seeing it is clear, that all were not thus given to Him, (for such are expressly distinguished from the passed-by world, *Joh. 6. 17.*) Therefore all cannot be said to be proposed by God to the Mediator ; and so consequently (which is the Conclusion of the main Argument,) His sufferings and death cannot be said to be intended as a price and satisfaction for the redeeming of all and every one ; Nor, without the intention of the blessed Parties contracting, can they be said to be a price for any : for, the price must needs relate to what is proposed to be redeemed or bought, this being the series, the Mediator did redeem these for whom He engaged and whose debt He did undertake ; Again, He did undertake for these, and for these only, who were proposed and given by the Lord to Him for that end ; But these were not all men, but some few that were peculiarly given to Him, as separated from others : Therefore, from the first to the last, it will follow, that not all men, but some few, peculiarly chosen by God, and given to Christ, were redeemed by His death, and have these sufferings, intended by the Mediator and accepted of by the Lord JEHOVAH, as a price and satisfaction for their sins.

Arg. 2. Secondly, It may be thus concluded, If these that are redeemed by Christs blood be not all of every Tongue, Kindred, and Nation ; but some out of every Tongue, Kindred, and Nation, &c. Then all are not redeemed : for, these are opposite in this respect, to wit, a whole Nation, or every person of a Nation, and some of them only : But the redeemed are not all of every Nation, &c. but some out of all Tongues, Kindreds, and Nations, &c. as was cleared, *vers. 9.* Therefore all are not redeemed. And what can be the reason of this expression here, *Thou hast redeemed us out of every Tongue, Kindred, &c.* if it be not to distinguish these few redeemed ones of these Nations, from the great number of the unredeemed in the same ; and thereby to set out the peculiarity of Gods love to them whom He redeemeth, who hath designed this benefit to them, when He hath passed by others to whom He was no less obliged, or rather to whom He is no more disobliged in respect of any thing in men ? Also, by this expression, there is a clear difference put between the song of the redeemed (which is grounded upon Christs death) and the song of a Visible Church, which doth arise from a Visible Church-relation : for, *Chap. 11. 17, 18, &c.* the whole Nations become the Lords in that respect, and they praise Him upon that ground ; but the song of the redeemed, is of some out of every Tongue, Kindred and Nation, &c. which doth expressly insinuate, that Redemption by Christs blood is not of equal extent with the Visible Church, but is peculiar to the Elect therein : and therefore much less can it be of equal extent with the whole World.

Thirdly, If this Redemption of Christs, and His laying down of His life for any, be the evidence of His most special and peculiar love, Then it cannot be extended to all ; because His peculiar love doth not extend it self to all indifferently : for, if so, then it would not be peculiar but common ; and therefore the effect thereof cannot be of more general extent : But the former is clear in this place, to wit, that Redemption by Christs death, is a fruit and evidence of His most peculiar love. Therefore, &c. That this is a special and peculiar favour, appeareth, first, from their being so affected in this song as having this mercy peculiarly to praise Him for, to wit, that He had redeemed them by His blood, which others had not. And secondly, that they mention this as a favour, beyond which there cannot be a greater, and which doth singularly engage them to Him beyond all other favours that have been bestowed upon them. Thirdly, The very expressions of their song bear forth their sense of the peculiarity of this mercy, as, *Thou hast redeemed us out of every Tongue, Kindred, and Nation,* that sheweth His taking notice of them singularly beyond others ; and that He did this by His blood, sheweth this to be an expressing of His love to them in a most wonderful and singular manner. Fourthly, If this mercy were not peculiar to them, then it might be said that one person were no more obliged to praise for this Redemption, and to be affected therewith, than another ; and how inconsistent that will be with the scope, in this place, and with the present frame and conviction of these that praise, may be easily discerned, seeing their scope is to hold out themselves to be peculiarly obliged to be thankful for this mercy beyond all others ? Lastly, That this is a peculiar mercy, even the greatest that our Lord Jesus doth bestow upon any, appeareth from other Scriptures, as, *Joh. 15. 13. Greater love hath no man than this, to lay down his life for his friend, &c.* and *Rom. 8. 9, 10. God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, &c.* All which shew, that the love of God cannot more shine to one in any thing than in this, that Christ hath died for him ; and therefore it cannot be intended for any, but such as He doth peculiarly love, and whom He hath designed to be partakers of the most eminent and special effects thereof.

4ly. If all who are redeemed by Christs blood, be made Kings and

and Priests unto God, and be effectually called and made to reign upon earth &c. and if the connexion be certain between these, so that they who may claim to the one, may also claim to the other, Then Christs death is not a satisfaction for all, but for some; because, in experience it is clear, that all are not made Kings and Priests unto God, &c. But the former is true, to wit, all who are redeemed by Christs blood, are made Kings and Priests, &c. Therefore, &c. The truth of this minor, or, of the certainty of the connexion between being redeemed by Christs death, and being made Kings and Priests to God, is clear in the Text: for, all, who say in the 9. vers. *Thou hast redeemed us by Thy blood*, say in the 10. *and hast made us Kings and Priests unto God, &c.* which expressly importeth, that the one part of the song is of equal extent with the other. And if it were not so, then this song might be divided, and some might say, *Thou hast redeemed us, but we are not made Kings and Priests unto God*; which would look most unlike the language of a redeemed sinner, and weaken exceedingly the consolation of the redeemed, who could not be so comforted in Christs laying down His life for them, as they are holden forth to be in this song, if it were possible that the parts thereof could be divided. Also, it would mar the beauty of the Inconceivable grace, and peculiar love that shineth in this ground of their praise, and no way rouse the redeemed sinner to praise, because Christ had laid down His life for him, if it might be said, that *Thou hast redeemed me by Thy blood*, yet am I not sure if I shall be made a King and a Priest unto God, &c.

The force of this Argument, may be conceived these two ways, 1. thus, If Christs death, as it is a satisfaction, hath ever the Justification and Glorification of these for whom it is a satisfaction, following, upon it, Then Christs death cannot be a satisfaction for all; But the former is true, to wit, Christs death hath ever Justification and Salvation following upon it, to these for whom it is a satisfaction: Therefore, &c. That Justification and Salvation ever follow thereupon, appeareth, 1. from the Text; these only, and all these who are redeemed by His blood, are also made Kings and Priests, and have also saving effects following thereupon, as was said. 2. It is clear from the nature of the Covenant: for, if Christs undertaking to satisfy for some, in whose name He did become surety, did make Him in Justice liable to their debt and to the payment thereof, so as He could not be conceived to be the Cautioner according to the terms of the Covenant, but also He behooved to have the imputation of their sin, actually following thereupon; so, on the other side, His satisfaction cannot but be equally effectual for the procuring of actual freedom to these whose room He sustained in the laying down of that satisfaction. Again, this effect, to wit, the Justification of these for whom He undertook, is (to speak so) the recompence and satisfaction which is by the Lord engaged-for and made sure to Him for His sufferings, and the travel of His soul, according to that word, *Isa. 53. 11. He shall see of the travel of His soul, and shall be satisfied*: and if it be so, then there must be a necessary connexion between Christs suffering in the stead of any, and their obtaining of Justification; otherwise it might be said, that the Mediator for that part of the travel of His soul, did want the promised and engaged-for satisfaction. And as we cannot conceive but both sides of that Covenant of Redemption, must be fulfilled, and the Mediator cannot but be satisfied in His design; so, we cannot but conceive the necessity of their Justification and Salvation whose iniquities Christ hath born. This is also further clear in the following words, to wit, by His knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities. Where these three things are clear, 1. What it is that Christ accounteth satisfaction for the travel of His soul: that is, to have many justified. 2. What the ground is that procureth this Justification: that is, His bearing of their iniquity: for, this is the reason of the former, many shall be justified, because, Christ

shall pay for them, and bear their sins. And if this connexion were not certain, and peremptory between these two, Then this consequence and reasoning would be utterly brangled and made void, if it might be said that Christ did bear the iniquity of any, who yet should not be justified. 3. It is clear also from that place, what these many are, that shall be justified; to wit, those whose iniquities Christ doth bear: for, He shall justify many, because He shall bear their iniquities; where, the many that shall be justified, in the first words, and these whose iniquities Christ doth bear, in the last words, are of equal extent: and this relative, their iniquity, doth expressly relate to the many spoken of before. Which words do strongly confirm what is said, to wit, that there is an inseparable connexion between Christs bearing the iniquity of any, and their obtaining of Justification; for, the Prophet doth not only make them of equal extent, but he doth also draw the necessity and certainty of the Justification and Salvation of many, as a consequent from this antecedent, that *Christ hath born their iniquities*. And is, in a word, this, Christ hath born the iniquity of many, Therefore it cannot be but these many must be justified: which reasoning, being the reasoning of the holy Ghost, must be sure; and therefore none can be said to be redeemed, or to have their iniquities born by Christ, but such as come actually to obtain Justification. Lastly, The necessity of this connexion between Christs dying for any, and their obtaining of actual Justification and Salvation, may thus be made out, If the Lord bestow the greater, benefit upon any, Then the lesser cannot but be expected from Him also; But the giving of His Son to death for any, is a greater mercy than actual Justification and Salvation; Therefore He cannot but bestow the last on these upon whom He hath bestowed the first. Both parts of the Argument will be confirmed from *Rom. 5. 8, 9, 10.* and *Chap. 8. vers. 32.* In the one place, the Apostle reasoneth thus, *while we were yet sinners, God commended His love to us, in giving Christ to die for us*: therefore having obtained such a mercy, we may much more look to be saved from wrath through Him. And to deny the consequent in the former Argument, would enervate this reasoning of the Apostle. In the other place, it is *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, How shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?* Where the Apostle doth not only shew, that all things do follow where Christ is bestowed; but also He doth it in such a manner, as doth shew the absurdity and unreasonableness of thinking the contrary, to wit, that it can be possible that God will bestow so excellent a gift as His Son to be delivered up for any, and yet withhold any good thing from such.

A second way, by which we may conceive the force of the former Argument, is this, (which also is a new Argument of itself) That which would weaken the redeemeds consolation and enervate the grounds of their praise, contrary to the strain and scope of this Song, ought not to be admitted in the Doctrine of Redemption; But to say, that all are redeemed by Christs death, yet so, that the greater part of them shall never be justified, nor partake of life through Him, &c. doth exceedingly weaken the redeemeds consolation, and enervate the grounds of their praise, contrary to the scope of this Song; Therefore, that Doctrine of universal Redemption, is not to be admitted, as being derogatory to the solide consolation of the redeemed, what ever be pretended. That it derogateth to their consolation, appeareth thus, If the Justification, Salvation, &c. of the redeemed be not necessarily and peremptorily knit unto Christs laying down of His life for them, Then were even their Justification and Salvation uncertain, and so none of them could heartily praise for the same, or comfort themselves therein; much lesse could all do this: both which, are expressly contrary to the words and scope of this Song. Again, if no redeemed Person, Believer, or Child of God, can so comfort themselves by drawing con-



clusions from this Doctrine, *Christ hath died for all, yet, all shall not be saved*, as they may be comforted and have their hearts cheered to praise from this, *That Christ hath not redeemed all, nor hath died for them, yet all for whom He died, and whom He redeemed, shall be justified and saved*, Then must the former Doctrine be exceedingly derogatory to the people of God their consolation; But the former is true: Therefore, &c. That this Doctrine of such an universal Redemption, doth not yeeld such comfortable conclusions to the Believer, as the other, will appear by comparing them together: for, the great consolation of the Believer, is, upon solide grounds, to conclude an unchangeable interest in God; But the latter, and not the former, will yeeld this. For, this is solide and comfortable reasoning, These that are redeemed, are made Kings and Priests to God, and shall reign with Him, &c. because, there is an indissoluble and peremptory connexion between these; But, may one assume, I am redeemed, Therefore, &c. If this assumption be questioned, to wit, whether I be redeemed or not? because Redemption is not universal, Then it may thus proceed; All these that are Spiritually Kings and Priests, and being made subject to Christ, are freed from the dominion of their corruption, and admitted with boldnesse to offer themselves and their service to God by Christ Jesus, &c. these are redeemed, and shall certainly obtain Salvation; But the conscience, upon self-examination, where there is ground for it, may assume, It is so with me; Therefore I am redeemed and shall obtain Salvation, &c. This is a comfortable and solide conclusion, and cannot fail where the premises are well grounded, because of the necessary connexion that is between Redemption, Justification, Sanctification, and Salvation, So that one of them, being evidenced, doth infer all: and Spiritually to reign in some measure over the world, and a body of death, and Spiritually to perform worship unto God, &c. being infallible evidences of Sanctification, and fruits of this Redemption, they give good ground for a conscience to make application of the former general truth: whereas, on the contrary, if we will loose this connexion, and say, that all are redeemed, or Christ hath died for them, and yet few will be saved, It cannot but ever leave the soul at an uncertainty under this most comfortable conclusion, Although I be redeemed, yet I may perish; because, many for whom Christ hath died, are never actually freed from the wrath of God; and thereby the soul should be still left in a comfortlesse condition, which is most unlike the nature of this Redemption which Christ hath purchased, and most disagreeable to the consolation which is allowed to the redeemed by God, and wherein they comfort themselves in this Song. We conclude then, that it is more comfortable to a Believer to reason from this Universal, *all that are redeemed, and are Kings and Priests unto God, shall be saved*, where the consequent and antecedent, are of equal extent; than to say, *all are redeemed, and yet few shall or none may be saved*. And this being the way of the Lord, it cannot but be most comfortable to His People; and it is a vain thing for man to imagine by his carnal reasonings to mould a more comfortable Doctrine: for though, at first, it look more plausible-like to flesh, to say, that all are redeemed, than to say, but some; yet indeed it doth not prove so: for even, upon supposition that that ground were laid, no man could gather any solide consolation therefrom, but upon condition of his receiving of Christ, and resting upon Him by Faith: Now, Faith in Christ, being supposed, this ground, *few are redeemed, but all these who are redeemed shall be saved*, doth yeeld more solide consolation than the former; because, it carrieth with it a certainty of Salvation to such: whereas the other ground, pretending to bear forth a possibility of Salvation to all, or, a salvability, doth indeed make it certain to none.

If any shall say, that this is true indeed upon supposition that one be by Faith in Christ; Then it cannot be denied, but

so to conclude, is more comfortable: but supposing one not to be a Believer, Is it not then a comfortlesse Doctrine to say, *that all are not redeemed? &c.* because it leaveth this stumbling-block before the person, that he knoweth not whether he ought to believe or not, because he knoweth not whether he be redeemed or not: and this thought may also follow him, if he be not redeemed, can his believing be useful to him? *Ans.* There are several mistakes in this Objection, Therefore we shall answer several wayes thereunto: And first, we say, that even upon supposition that one doth not believe in Christ, this Doctrine asserted is more comfortable than the other: because, first, he hath no lesse warrant to believe in Christ and rest on Him, than if the other Doctrine were supposed: for, it is not Christs dying for any that warranteth him to believe, or is the object of his Faith; but it is Gods call, requiring faith of him, and Gods offer and promise kniting life to the performance of that condition of believing called-for. These are contained in Gods revealed Will, which is the rule of our practice, and the ground of our Faith. And according to this Doctrine, a hearer of the Gospel hath these grounds for his warrant; and there can no other be given, even upon the contrary supposition. Secondly, If he be brought to yeeld to His call, to receive His offer, and to trust himself to His promise, he hath then more solid ground of consolation (because of the certain connexion that is betwixt Faith and Salvation) than he can have by the other Doctrine; which by the interwoven Errors concerning Free-will, the falling away of such as sometime have been true Believers, &c. is wholly brangled. And so, supposing him not yet to have closed with Christ, he hath the more effectual motives to engage him thereunto; because, by so doing, all is made sure. 2. We answer, this Doctrine of particular Redemption, (to call it so) doth never make Salvation impossible to any that will receive Christ and rest on Him: but, on the contrary, though it deny that all men are redeemed, or shall be saved; yet doth it assert this Universal, *that all whosoever shall believe, are redeemed and shall be saved*; which certainly doth make the expectation of life through faith in Christ, to be the more certain; and doth lay the more solid ground for a tossed sinner to cast himself upon, when it saith, there was never a sinner of any rank or quality that did believe, or shall believe in Jesus Christ, but he shall be saved: from which he may conclude, Then if I can, or shall believe in Christ, I also shall be saved: which conclusion, will not follow from the other Doctrine. And seeing this is the very expresse letter of the Gospel, *whosoever believeth shall be saved*, there is no ground left to question the same, without manifest reflecting upon the faithfulness of God. 3. We answer, If any thing follow from this ground, *all are not redeemed*, it is this, Therefore all shall not be saved; or, Therefore all will not believe: both which are true. And it doth only make Salvation impossible to him who doth not believe in Christ: for, to such it saith, if thou believe not, thou shall not be saved; neither in such a case hast thou ground to think thy self redeemed: and what absurditie is in these? yea, upon the grounds of the other Doctrine, there is none without Faith that can promise themselves life, or comfort themselves in their pretended universal Redemption, more than upon the grounds which we have laid down: therefore it can never be said, that believing in Christ, is uselesse according to this Doctrine: yea, it is asserted to be alwayes useful and profitable, whereas, by the opposite grounds, it may be often without these comfortable effects following thereupon. In the fourth place, we Answer, That this Objection (as much more in this controversie) doth flow from a mistake of the true nature of justifying Faith; for, it supponeth it, to be the hearts receiving of, and closing with this as a truth, that Christ hath died for me in particular, and that His death was particularly intended for me. This is the more dangerous, because it hath been entertained

entertained by many, and hath been the occasion of mistake, even to some great men, who have laid this for a ground, (as *Cameron* doth on this subject) *Christus mortuus est pro te, si tu id factum credas*, that is, Christ hath died for thee, if thou believe it so to be: now, according to that ground, it is impossible but to miscarry, both in reference to this Doctrine, the Doctrine of Justification, and several other most concerning-truths. It is to be adverted then, that when we are called to believe in Christ, we are not called instantly to believe that Christ hath offered up Himself as a satisfaction for us in particular; but we are to conceive it in this order, First, We are called to believe the truth of the Gospel, and the way of Salvation laid down therein, to wit, that there is no name under Heaven by which a sinner can be saved but by the Name of Jesus, and that yet all who believe in Him, shall be justified and saved, &c. Thus we may apply that word, *Heb. 11. 6. He that cometh to God, must first believe that He is, &c.* for, if this general truth be not acknowledged, saving Faith wanteth the discoverie of a sufficient and fit object to rest it self upon. Secondly, We are then called to receive this Christ, offered to us in the Gospel, and by Faith to betake our selves to Him so discovered, and there, as on a solid foundation, to rest for the obtaining of Justification and life by the virtue of His satisfaction, according to the offer that is made in the Gospel. This is the main act of saving Faith, whereby a sinner cometh to be entituled to Christ, and to the benefits of His death. Whereupon, thirdly, followeth (our accepting of the forsaide offer being supposed) a warrant to look upon Christ as ours, upon the benefits purchased by Him as belonging to us; and upon our selves, as actually redeemed by Him; none of which, before that, could have been warrantably concluded: but this being supposed, there is good ground for it; because a sinner by receiving of Christ, cometh to have interest in Him, and so consequently in all that is His: for, Christ and His benefits are not separated; and therefore except there be ground to bear out this title to Christ Himself, there is no warrant to believe that any of His benefits do belong to us. Now, according to this forsaide order, no hearer is ever called to believe what is false, because these three are ever true, to wit, First, That life is certain through Faith in Christ and no otherways. Secondly, that one who is called to believe on Him, ought to obey, and that Gods call is a good ground for that obedience. Thirdly, This is also a truth, that one who hath yeilded, may look upon himself as accepted of God, and redeemed by Christ Jesus, because, in the method forsaide, there is warrant to believe all these. But, if any will invert the order, and at first perswade himself that the benefits of Christs purchase do belong to him, as being particularly redeemed by His death, before he actually rest on him by Faith; this will prove but strong presumption, and never give title to Christ or any thing that is His; but, on the contrary, greatly provoke the Lord: because in all the Word of God, there is no promise of Justification, Life, or Salvation, or any benefit of Christs Redemption made to any person, but to him that believeth: and to do otherways, is, as if a woman that were wooed for marriage should fancie her self to have title and right to all the priviledges of such a mans wife, before the marriage were actually consummated, or before she had given her formal consent thereunto. And so according to these grounds, we see, that all hearers are not simply and instantly called to believe that Christ did die for them; But, first, to receive Him as their Saviour, and then to draw such a conclusion, which upon the performance of that condition, can never fail. From this also, we may see the fallacie and weakness of that much tossed vain Objection, to wit, That which every one is obliged to believe, that must be truth: But every one is obliged to believe that Christ did die for him in particular. Therefore, that Christ did die for every one in particular must be a truth. This

Argument, I say, dependeth only upon the former mistake of Faith: and this being denied, that all men are instantly called to believe that Christ died for them in particular, when they are called to believe in Him for obtaining of life, The strength of it will vanish: because, supposing that many in the Visible Church (which experience doth put out of question) do never believe in Christ, or by Faith rest on Him for the obtaining of life; Then it will follow, that many, even in the Visible Church, are never obliged to believe that Christ hath died for them in particular; because, none hath warrant to make that application, but such as have first betaken themselves by Faith unto Christ: whereby the assumption of that Argument is palpably false; for, it must be so assumed, Every man that heareth the Gospel, and hath received Christ, ought to believe that He hath died for him: and so the conclusion will be, That Christ hath died for all that believe in Him, which is true; or, it must be, That every one that heareth the Gospel is obliged to receive Christ and rest upon Him, and upon that condition may expect life; which will make nothing to the intended purpose.

This occasion giveth ground to insist a little further in clearing the extent of the merit of Christs death in respect of the effects thereof: and though it be neither possible for us to make every thing fully clear, nor pertinent to our purpose, long to insist on the same; yet, the former grounds being laid, we may enquire shortly in some things, and answer to them with a particular respect to this place. First, It may be enquired, What is the proper effect of Christs satisfaction, and that which is purchased thereby to sinners? Secondly, If this purchase extend to the procuring of Faith and the first Grace, as it doth to the procuring of Pardon and Justification? Thirdly, If it may be laid, that any benefit, in any respect, doth redound to any Reprobate from Christs death, as the proper effect of that purchase. And, fourthly, If there may be an Universal conditional Redemption admitted, as consistent with the former grounds; yet so, as the effect thereof is made sure to the Elect, and to them only?

To the first, to wit, What is the native, proper and immediate effect of Christs purchase unto the redeemed? We Answer, That we conceive it to be not only the procuring of Salvation to be possible to them, so that now, by the interveining of this satisfaction, there is a way for the just God to pardon mens sins without wronging of His Justice, which without this could not have been: and so some say, that by Christs death God is made *placabilis*, or, (to say so) put in a capacity to be pleased, or made placable; but is not actually appeased, or *placatus*, which is the assertion of the *Arminians*. Nor yet is it only to make reconciliation with God, upon the condition of believing and Faith in Christ, possible, that is, by this interveining satisfaction to give a ground for Faith to rest upon, with hope of obtaining Salvation thereby, which otherways would not have been profitable, had not this satisfaction of Christs procured a new Covenant to be made upon that condition. Thus, according to some, Christ by His death, hath procured an object to be held forth to all to be by faith rested upon; and hath established this general, that all who should believe on Him, should be saved; and that Faith alone should have Salvation annexed to it, in whatsoever person it should be found: but such do deny, that actually and absolutely He hath redeemed any, or procured Faith, Justification and Salvation to them; But we say further, that the immediate and proper fruit and effect of Christs purchase to these for whom He suffered, is actual Redemption, and the benefits following thereupon, to be applied in due order and manner, and not the possibility thereof only. First, This is clear from the 9. *vers.* of this Chapter, where they acknowledge and praise for this, that Redemption and Justification, &c. are not only made possible unto them, but that absolutely they are purchased by Christs death for them, and that



that they are actually redeemed to God by His blood. Secondly, This doth clear it, that by His blood He is said to *make them Kings and Priests unto God*: which cannot be understood of the possibility only of any privilege, but must take in the absolute purchase and the actual conferring thereof in due order and time. Hence, *Revel. 1. 5. washing from our sins in His blood*, is mentioned as the proper effect of His purchase: and Justification and Salvation are frequently derived from Christ blood as from their immediate meritorious cause, particularly in that place, *Isai. 53. 11. whereof was spoken a little before*. And if there were no more but a possibility of Salvation flowing from Christs death, then Christ might never have seen His seed, or never had satisfaction for the travel of His soul. And if by Christs death only, Faith and Salvation should be knit together, and so Faith made thereby to have an object proposed to it, and that indifferently in respect of all; Then it will follow, that the grounds of the redeemed Song would not be, *Thou hast redeemed us by Thy blood, and made us Kings and Priests, &c.* neither could these be accounted the immediate effects of His purchase, but that He hath given them a ground to believe upon, and made Salvation certain upon condition of believing: which would not be so cheerful a Song to the redeemed; neither would it warrant them to say, *Thou hast redeemed us*, in a peculiar sense, seeing these effects are common to others: also many might have ground to bless for these mercies, beside these who are made Kings and Priests. All which, are most inconsistent with the strain and scope of this place.

It is true, if we will consider the way and method how these benefits are applied to the redeemed, or, the order by which they come to be possessed of them, that instantly upon Christs suffering, all cannot be said to be actually justified, nor glorified, more than they can be said all to have really existed; because the Lord in His Covenant, hath particularly concluded, when, and by what means, such persons, and no other should be brought to believe in Christ, and actually to be justified, even as well as when they should have a being, or at what time their life should be brought to an end, and they actually be glorified; yet, if we consider the things purchased, in respect of the bargain, we will find that they were absolutely and actually bought unto such persons, and satisfied for by the Mediator, so as not only, in His intention, He aimed to make their Justification and Salvation possible, but really and simple to make it sure, and to procure it to them; yet so, as in due time and method it is to be applied. And we conceive, that it is a dangerous assertion to say, that *Peter* before his believing, had no more interest any way in Christs death than *Judas*: which yet followeth upon the last opinion that was casten, and is acknowledged by the Authors thereof. See *Cameron part. 3. pag. 583.* Indeed, if we will consider *Peters* own estate, as considered in its self, without respect to the Covenant of Redemption; and if we consider any actual claim, which he might lay to Christs death in that condition for his own peace and comfort, there was no difference: but if we will consider Christs sufferings as in the bargain of Redemption before the Lord, the procuring of *Peters* Justification and Glorification was really undertaken for by the Mediator, and his debt satisfied for by His suffering in his name, so as it could not fail in reference to him, more than if he had actually had a being, and had been justified and glorified when that transaction was closed; none of all which can be said of *Judas*, whose name was never in the Covenant of Redemption, as *Peters* was.

The second thing moved, was to consider, if Faith and other saving Graces be fruits of Christs purchase, so as by His satisfaction He did not only really intend the purchasing of pardon upon condition of believing, but also the purchasing of Regeneration, Faith, &c. that so the Elect might come to the obtain-

ing of pardon? *Arminius*, and the Parrons of Free-will, do deny Faith to be a fruit of Christs purchase. So doth *Cameron* and some others, but with this difference, that these last do assert, that the gift of believing doth not flow from mans free-will or any sufficient grace, bestowed upon all; but from Gods Sovereign good-will, thinking meet to bestow that gift upon some whom He hath Elected and not upon others: and this, they say, is a meer fruit of His Sovereign good-will, without respect to the merit of Christs death, even as His decree of election was. The reason of the denying of this, we conceive to be, their making of the fruit and effect of Christs death to be common to all; and it being clear in experience, that all men have not Faith, it cannot be consistent with the former ground to account it the fruit of Christs purchase: for, what He hath purchased, cannot but be brought to pass, (as elsewhere *Cameron* asserteth) and so according to their first ground, Faith would be common to all men. And to say, that Christ hath purchased Faith conditionally, as He hath purchased life and Salvation unto all, were absurd: because there is a clear condition, upon which men may expect life, to wit, believing; but there can be no such condition conceived, upon which Faith may be said to be purchased. But to answer what was moved, we say, That Conversion, Regeneration, Faith, Repentance, &c. are no less the fruit of Christs purchase than pardon and Justification, &c. because, first, by His purchase, *we are made Kings and Priests unto God*: And wherein do these privileges consist but in the having, and exercising of these inward saving graces of the Spirit, whereby the Elect are made in a spiritual sense Kings and Priests? Secondly, It can not be well understood how Justification and Glorification may be said to be purchased by Him, if all the steps, by which these are necessarily brought about, be not in the same manner procured. Thirdly, We are said to be blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, *Ephes. 1. 3.* which must thus be understood, to wit, that by His merit we have these communicated to us: and is not Faith and saving Grace to be accounted amongst spiritual blessings? Fourthly, He is made to us of God, not only *Righteousness*, but also *Wisdom, Sanctification, and Redemption*, *1 Corinth. 1. 30, 31.* and certainly under these expressions, all saving graces needful to the working out of our Salvation are comprehended. And the end of this, is, that whosoever glorieth, may glory alone in Him, as having all in Him, and nothing but by Him. Neither would there be such occasion of glorifying in Him, if these were not purchased by Him. Fifthly, The considering of the Covenant of Redemption, will also fully clear this; for, no question, that must be a fruit of Christs purchase, which the Lord hath promised to the Mediator, as a satisfaction to Him for His sufferings: Now, this is clear, that it is not only promised to Christ, that many through Faith in Him shall be justified; but that certainly He shall see His seed and the fruit of the travel of His soul, *Isai. 53. 10, 11.* That His people shall be willing in the day of His power, *Psal. 110. 3.* That these whom the Father hath given Him, shall come unto Him, *Joh. 6. 37.* and that they shall all be taught of God, &c. and what else can these special promises import but this, to wit, that the Son, the Mediator, for laying down of His life, shall have many given Him, and actually by the Spirit drawn to Him; and made to believe in Him and to acknowledge Him as the Author of their eternal Salvation, without which, that promise of *seeing His seed* could never be accomplished? Yea, must not all the promises of the Covenant have one rise, and be derived through one meritorious cause? Now, these promises of Sanctification, such as *to take away the stony heart, to give a new heart, to cleanse us from all our idols, and wash us with clean water, &c.* are in one bundle with the promises of His pardoning our iniquity and remembering our sins no more, as is clear in *Ezek. 36. 25, 26, &c.* and *Jer. 31. vers. 33, 34, &c.* And seeing it cannot be

be denied but the last promises are grounded upon Christs satisfaction, must nor the first be so also? especially considering, that without him there is no access for binding up a Covenant betwixt God and sinners. Neither can it be denied but Faith is a part of that new heart; and a special fruit of that spirit which he promised to pour out upon his people. Sixthly, In *Tit. 2. 14.* our being separated to be a peculiar people to Christ and zealous of good works, &c. is expressly asserted to be his design in laying down of his life for his people. Also, *Titus 3. vers. 5.* and *6.* the washing of Regeneration and renewing of the holy Ghost (which must take in all particular Graces) are said to be shed on us abundantly through Christ Jesus; which cannot otherways be understood; but that we have these by the intervening procurement of Christs satisfaction. Lastly, all that we pray for, we pray for it in Christs name; as having obtained access to seek the same through his purchase: Now, it cannot be denied but Faith, Holiness, and increase therein, may be prayed for: and therefore these must be understood to be procured by him also.

The third Question was, If it may be said, that the Reprobates, or any Reprobate, do enjoy any common mercy by virtue of Christs purchase and Redemption? or if any mercy bestowed upon any reprobate, or enjoyed by them, may be said to be the proper fruit of Christs purchase, or properly to be purchased by his death to them? In answer to this we shall lay down these Assertions, which being granted, there will be no great hazard to the main matter.

*Affert. 1.* There is no saving nor eternal mercy procured to any Reprobate by Christs death: and so according to the Scripture-language, it cannot be said that Christ hath redeemed, satisfied for them, or born their iniquities in their room before the justice of God, thereby to procure any such mercy to them, because, first, to be given to Christ, to be redeemed, and to be justified, are ever of equal extent in Scripture, and necessarily knit together with his bearing their iniquity. Secondly, The proper and native fruits of Christs death, are not divided, but they all go together; so that for whom he satisfied, and to whom he purchased anything in one respect, he did so in all. Therefore we will find him praying for these who were given him; and for whose sake he did sanctifie himself, *John 17.* even when he doth exclude the reprobate world who were not of this number, from these his prayers. Thirdly, The proper fruit of Christs purchase, is that which is satisfaction to himself for the travel of his soul, &c. but no mercy, which is common to a Reprobate can satisfy him: for, his satisfaction consisteth in peculiar saving mercies, such as actually to see his seed, to have many justified, &c. which mercies cannot be said to be purchased to any Reprobate: and so it cannot be said, that any saving or eternal mercy is purchased to them; for, if they were purchased to them, then necessarily they were to be bestowed unto them; and if so, they could not be called Reprobates. We take this for granted then, that no saving thing is purchased to them, and that Christ cannot in any proper sense be called their Redeemer, nor to have sustained their place and persons before the Justice of God.

*Affert. 2.* We say, that yet many Reprobates do here in time enjoy many things, which they had never enjoyed, had not Christ suffered. Of these, Christs death may well be called the cause (*sine qua non*) or, without which these had not been enjoyed: such are the preaching of the Gospel, and the glad tidings of the conditional offer of life which is made in it; yea, It may be, that the keeping off of many temporal judgments and eternal also for a time, doth flow from this: whereby (as it were by the Gardeners intercession, *Luk. 13.*) the cutting down of many a barren tree is for a time suspended, that thereby the glory of Grace may be the more manifested, the honour of the Mediator the more highly advanced, and in the close, the

glory of spotless justice made the more clearly to shine, because of their greater inexcusableness. This cannot be denied to follow upon Christ Jesus His sufferings, in so far as they necessarily follow upon the agreement wherein they were transacted, and upon the promises made to him in the Covenant of Redemption; unto all which, his sufferings are presupposed as the stipulation upon his side: Now, it being certain that there are some Elect ones given to him by that Covenant in all ages of the world, and that he hath a visible Church and Ordinances granted to him for the ingathering of them, which is so and so to be administered, to wit, by gathering under Ordinances both sheep and goats, and such like; it must necessarily follow upon the supposition of this transaction in these terms, that the world must continue for so many ages, that the Gospel should be preached in such and such places, and at such and such times, that such and such lights should shine for holding forth clearly the truth of the Gospel; yea, that such and such common gifts should be bestowed upon many Reprobates for the adorning of this visible Church, the honour of the Head thereof, the furtherance of the edification of the Elect, and many other things necessary for the attaining of the ends foreaid. And according to the former supposition, these cannot be denied to be decreed in the Counsel of God, and contained in the Covenant of Redemption, largely taken; because accidentally (to speak so) and by reason of the manner of administration concluded, they conduce to the honour of the Mediator, and to the furthering of his design, which is to have the pleasure of the Lord prospering in his hand.

*Affert. 3.* Although these former Assertions be true; yet we say, that the saving blessings that are purchased to the redeemed by Christs death, may be, and are far otherways to be conceived, as the proper effects and fruits of Christs purchase to them, than any common mercy can be which followeth thereupon to any Reprobate. For first, The purchasing of the Elect, and of saving Grace and Salvation to them, and what may tend to their good, was intended by the Mediator in a subordination to the glorifying of his Grace in them; and so his Glory and their good, are joyntly intended in the same: this cannot be said of the other; for, though the things, which flow from his death be good in themselves, and though it cannot be denied but that therein also he intendeth his own Glory; yet it cannot be said, that these things are purchased by him as advantageous to them, in respect of any fruit that should flow therefrom unto them: because the effect sheweth, that in the end they have no advantage by them: and therefore it cannot be said, that he intended them as advantageous to them. I know some learned men do think, that some Reprobates, by the power of common restraining Grace, and the force of Ordinances, are kept from falling in many gross evils, which otherwise they might have fallen into; and so in the end are kept from the greater degree of punishment, which they might have been liable to, I grant that it may be said; that some civil and formal hypocrites will be punished with a more gentle degree of wrath (to speak so) than others, or than themselves would have been punished with, had they not been by such common Grace restrained; yet, this must be understood comparatively with respect to the case as it now standeth, that is, a civil hypocrite, living under the Gospel, with many common moral induements, and giving much outward countenance to Ordinances, &c. shall be more gently dealt with in the day of Judgement, than if he had not come that length in a common reformation, under the means: yet, I suppose, it cannot be said, that such a person shall have less punishment than if Christ had never died, or he had never had any knowledge of the Gospel, or any common gifts of the Spirit, but had lived in more profanity without the same; for, although the sins of a civil moral hypocrite, be less in themselves than the gross profanity of a



blind heathen; yet, considering the circumstances that do aggregate the same, they will be found to be of a more bloody dye before God. Hence, so often in Scripture, the sin of refusing Christ in the most civil hypocrites, is aggregated beyond the sins of *Sodom* and *Gomorrab, Tyre & Sion, &c.* Neither doth this flow causally from the Gospels being revealed to such persons, but from their abusing and slighting of the same. Whatever mercies therefore of this kind are bestowed upon any reprobate, they are bestowed upon them for the honour of the Mediator, and the good of the Elect; and so as such, must be said to have been purchased by Christs death. 2. Whatever Christ hath procured to the Elect, he hath procured it by satisfying Justice for them, and by sustaining in his own person the curse that was due to them, so that the Lords forbearing of them, his making offer of the Gospel to them, &c. are not only consequents, following upon the Mediators death and the Covenant of Redemption, but are properly purchased fruits thereof: and so the Gospel is preached to them, they are called unto a Church-state, &c. because Christ Jesus hath satisfied Justice in their name, for the quarrel which the holy God had against them, and hath purchased peace and every thing needful for their Salvation; so that now the Lord cannot but be kindly to them, and bestow these mercies on them according to the order and terms laid down in the Covenant: but on the other side, it cannot be said, that our Lord Jesus did so purchase to the Reprobate any of these mercies (which are indeed so in themselves) that are bestowed upon them, or that he satisfied in their room, or in their name paid any debt, or that the Lord is upon that account (as it were) engaged to be friendly to them, and bestow these things on them, as was observed to be in the case of the Elect: because, in no respect is Christ their Cautioner as having undertaken for them. These mercies then which come to them, are rather to be accounted consequents following upon Christs purchase, than proper effects thereof as to them; Yet necessarily they follow, that what properly hath been purchased by Christ to the Elect, may according to the order laid down, be accomplished. This will be somewhat clear by considering, *Mat. 24. 22.* where it is said, except these dayes should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: yet, *for the Elects sake they shall be shortened*: the mercy promised there, to wit, *the shortening of those troublesome dayes*, is a temporal mercy, and common to many Reprobate as well as Elect, during that time; yet, in respect of the Elect, it may be accounted a fruit of Christs purchase and of Gods Covenant-love; because otherways, these whom CHRIST had redeemed might be in hazard; against which, the Covenant hath fully provided. But, on the other side, as to the Reprobate, it is but a consequent of his death unto them, and bestowed upon them not for themselves, but for the good of the Elect amongst them, for whose sake it is said expressly, *that these dayes shall be shortened*. And so it is to be conceived, as supposing it to be conditioned to Christ simply, that such a tribulation shall not continue, because the performing of the articles of the Covenant doth require the same; in that case consequently the Reprobate, living in that time and place, are sharers of that outward deliverance; yet considering it as a Covenanted mercy and a proper fruit of Christs purchase, it doth agree to the Elect only, for whose good it was covenanted; and to them it may well be called a purchased mercy. It is true there doth no consequence follow upon Christs death, but what was foreseen and intended by him to follow thereupon; yet it cannot be said, that all these consequents were intended as proper fruits of his purchase to the Reprobate, as the mercies are that come unto the Elect; but we must acknowledge a difference between a consequent and a proper effect; otherwise we might say, that the greater inexcusableness and condemnation of many Reprobates, are proper fruits of Christs purchase, because these do follow there-

upon, and had not followed had he not died. And we might say, that the suspending of the shutting up of the devil in hell in his everlasting torments, were a fruit of Christs purchase; because, supposing Christ to have a Church, and such work for devils, in the exercising thereof, while it is on earth; and that Christ is to judge the devils at the last day, and (as a part of his glory) to pass the final sentence in reference to them, &c. It must necessarily follow upon these suppositions, that the devils last judgement, and absolute shutting up in the pit, must be suspended for such a long time; yet there is none that will esteem this to be a proper fruit of Christs purchase, though it be a necessary consequent depending upon the same. And if any more be pleaded for, because the offer of the Gospel is made to many Reprobates, this may be said, that Christs having of a visible Church and Gospel preached therein, is properly purchased by him, that being necessary for the end proposed; yet, if we consider the preaching of the Gospel, in reference to such a person, as suppose to *Judas*, or, how it cometh that he is a Minister thereof, We conceive it is hard to say, that it was purchased by Christs death as a mercy to him, as if Christ had intended by his sufferings to satisfy Gods justice in less or in more upon his account. And if it cannot be said that any satisfaction is made to God in his name, how can it be said that properly any thing is purchased by Christs sufferings to him? for, this is certain, that it is Christs death, as it is a satisfaction and price offered in the name of any, that doth procure any good to them. Beside, Christs bearing of the sins of any, and their obtaining of Justification, are still linked together, as was formerly said: and therefore seeing no Reprobate is justified, it cannot be said, that Christ hath born their sins, and consequently, upon that account, hath procured any thing to them. This difference may be thus illustrated, as, suppose one having intended out of a number of slaves to relieve so many, should therefore covenant a price for them and actually pay the same, having withall this included in the bargain, that so many other slaves should be appointed to wait on Him till these ransomed ones were safely transported, and for that end that they should be for a time freed from some common drudgeries that other slaves are lying under, and be some-way fitted in their apparell and otherways as might become his honour, and further Him in the gathering together, shipping and transporting of these whom actually he had bought: yet still he neither mindeth the relieving of these, nor doth for that end pay in the least measure their ransom, but only hath this articulated to him as conducing to the good of the main bargain. In that case, it cannot be said that he had properly bought these whom he minded never to transport, or that any price, laid down in the principal bargain, was laid in their name; yet, it cannot be denied but that many advantages do follow upon that bargain to such beyond others; which yet, in the end, by reason of their own miscarriages, might turn to their greater hurt: as suppose, they should refuse to obey him, to put on the cloaths bestowed upon them, but should abandon him and renounce their present liberty and not wait on to the end, &c. and so procure themselves justly to be deprived of any favour, and to be punished for their ingratitude, so may it be said in the present case: yet we shall not much contend for words, as whether such a thing should be called a consequent or an effect? providing Christ be not said to have sustained the room of, or by being made sin, to have satisfied in less or more for any whom he doth not actually redeem and own for his.

The fourth question is, If Christ Jesus, the only absolute Redeemer of the Elect alone, may not yet be said to have redeemed all men conditionally, and in the laying down of his life, to have intended the purchasing of life to all, upon this condition, *if they should believe in him*? This conditional

Redemption

Redemption is diversly expressed by Learned men, who in their Writings do utter the grossness of the *Sabbath and Arminian* Doctrine concerning Redemption. Some say, that Christ died absolutely for none, but conditionally for all; that is, that He purchased life for all, upon condition that they should believe that He had died for them; and that God by His decree of Election hath decreed to give Faith to some and not to others, whereby Christs death becometh effectual to them, and not to others: which difference doth yet flow from nothing in Christs death. They say also, that Christ, by His death, procured freedom to all from the curse of the Law; so that that is removed from all, except any, by not believing that Christ hath died for them, shall make themselves liable to that curse, as *Camerton* asserteth, *pag. 384*. This opinion doth not lay the weight of merits making themselves to differ upon themselves, but it doth acknowledge the freedom, sovereignty and power of Grace, as also the impotency and corruption of nature; yet we conceive it is dangerous, and doth directly contradict what hath been asserted from the Text. For, 1. It denieth any, even the Elect, to be absolutely redeemed: which, though true in some sense, to wit, in respect of the method and manner of the application of the purchased Redemption; yet can it not be said to be true in respect of the purchase and bargain itself, or in respect of the parties bargaining in this purchase: because Christ did not buy pardon of sin and Salvation to sinners absolutely, upon condition that they should believe; but did particularly and absolutely purchase the pardon of sin and Salvation to such and such as were proposed to Him. And this He did, not by buying Salvation to the Elect upon condition they should believe, without making both the condition, to wit, Faith and Salvation sure unto them; but He absolutely redeemed *Peter, John*, and other Elect persons; by purchasing Salvation and every thing needful for the making of it sure unto them, although in due manner these be to be communicated according to the terms of the Covenant. 2. It doth deny Faith to be a fruit of Christs purchase; which is contrary to what was formerly said. 3. This doth assert the Reprobate by Christs death to be freed from the curse of the Law, *In the day that thou curst, &c.* which is not to be understood as if upon condition of believing they were to be freed from it, as if they did fulfill that condition; for that is not controverted: but it must be understood of some freedom from the curse of the Law that redoundeth actually to the Reprobate from Christs death. And it doth suppose them to have attained some freedom thereby, which their after unbelief and ingratitude do make void unto them. And so they have not this freedom from the curse offered to them upon condition of their believing, but they have it; it by their unbelief they do not mar their right to it. Now this, so understood, will infer, that Christ was made a curse in the room of all men, which is contrary to what is said: for, they cannot be thought to be freed any way from under the curse, except by His fulfilling it for them. And His bearing of the curse in the stead of any; or His taking on their iniquity, hath ever their freedom following upon it, for whom He did the same, as was formerly marked. Again, there are many of mankind (suppose young Children, dying before any actual sin) who cannot be liable to any other curse, but the curse of the Law; yet canst thou all these (even such as are without the visible Church and the promises) be said peremptorily and absolutely to be saved. Beside, this will infer that since the Reprobate shall not have the breach of the first Covenant imputed to them; or that they shall have that debt imputed to them, which Christ Himself did pay in their name: which is inconsistent with the Scriptures formerly mentioned. 4. This doth make Christs death, considered as to Him, and in itself, to be equally laid down for *Peter* and *Judas*, which the Authors of this opinion will allow; yet doth it necessarily follow thereupon; for, supposing Christ to die

absolutely for none, but conditionally for all, there is in that respect no more regard had to *Peter* than to *Judas*: for, He died conditionally for *Judas*, and He did no more for *Peter*; and so Salvation, upon the condition of believing, is made equally possible to both. And though, in Gods purpose, *Peter* hath Faith decreed for him; whereby he cometh to be absolutely justified; in which respect, there is a great difference betwixt *Peter* and *Judas*; for whom there is no such thing purposed; yet considering, that this faith which maketh the difference, according to the former opinion, is no proper effect of Christs purchase, but of Gods absolute Sovereignty, as Election is, it cannot be said, that because thereof there is any inequality in reference to Elect and Reprobate in respect of Christs death. It is true their acknowledging faith to be Gods sovereign and peculiar gift, doth not make the difference flow from *Peter* himself; yet it cannot be said, that it doth proceed from any thing in Christs purchase; in respect of His sustaining the person of the one more than of the other. 5. This doth also infer that Christ hath payed for such as shall again be brought to reckon for their own debt; yea, for the same debt which He hath payed: now, in Scripture, these two are ever put together, to wit, Christs bearing the iniquity of any or paying of their debt, and these persons being absolved from that charge in whose name he had payed. This is so sure; that the one doth still infer the other, as was formerly marked, as *Isai. 53*. He was wounded for our transgressions: whereupon it followeth, by his stripes, we (to wit, we for whose transgressions He was wounded) are healed: and again, *vers. 11*. He shall justify many, for he shall bear their iniquity; that is, these whose iniquity He shall bear, and whose debt He shall pay, they shall be certainly justified and absolved from the same. So is it, *2 Corinth. 5. 21*. He became sin for us, that is, took on Him to answer for our debt, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him, which sheweth, that His end in becoming sin for any, was, to have them actually freed from the same. The like is, *Gal. 3. vers. 13, 14*. He redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us, &c. that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles, &c. where actual redemption from the curse, and obtaining of the blessing, are made of equal extent with Christs suffering of the curse in the room of any: and so is it in many other Scriptures. And to say, that such for whom He paid, were again to be brought to reckoning themselves, doth directly contradict the scope of these places.

If any should say, that these Scriptures do not deny but such may be brought to reckon for their own sin, for whom Christ did only conditionally pay the debt; and the condition not being fulfilled by them, there is no absurdity that they themselves should be again called to reckon for the same: as also considering, that the Lords acceptance of such a price for them, was only upon the fulfilling of the condition of believing, wherein they have failed. To this we answer, First, that according to the former grounds notwithstanding of Christs death, payment might be exacted again, even from the Elect, if the Lord Himself did not graciously and freely enable them to fulfill the condition, because they are but conditionally redeemed also, and have not Faith purchased to them by Christs death more than the other. But because some may shift this, we answer, Secondly, That such a conditional payment is not spoken of in Scripture, neither do these places of Scripture speak of some whose iniquity Christ hath born, who shall thereby have freedom from being called to a reckoning; but they do speak absolutely of all for whom Christ hath suffered; and in whose name He hath paid any thing to God: for, all of them give ground for this connexion, *Christ hath born their sin, was made a curse for them, &c.* Therefore, they shall be justified and freed from the curse, &c. And this reasoning will not hold, except this universal proposition be presupposed, to



wit, that all whose sins Christ hath born, whose debt He hath undertaken, and in whose name He hath paid any price to the justice of God, &c. shall be justified, absolved from their debt, and not brought to a reckoning for the same. Now, it must either be assumed, that Christ hath paid a price in the name of many Reprobates, and hath born their sin before the justice of God; and it is evident how false the conclusion will be. Therefore the *minor* must be false, seeing the *major* is true; Or, we must subsume thus, But none of the Reprobates shall ever be justified or absolved from their own debt, Therefore it will follow, that for none of these did Christ become a curse or satisfy the justice of God: which is a truth. If it be yet said that His suffering in their name, was but conditional; and so it cannot be said simply, that He paid their debt, but upon such and such conditions only; and so He did not bare their iniquity, but upon condition that they should believe. To this we answer, First, This is almost one with the former objection, and may be again repelled, thus; either that conditional bearing of their iniquity, was a paying something in their name, or, it was not: If it was a paying in their name, and a laying out of any price by the Mediator, Then the consequence from the former Scriptures will still be urgent whatever the condition be; because, they assert, that all for whom Christ hath laid out His sufferings, and in whose room He hath sustained any part of the curse, &c. shall be partakers of Justification and life. And what ever the condition be, this conditional Redemption supposeth a price actually to have been laid down. If it be said, that actually Christ did lay down nothing for them, and in their name, when he suffered, but upon condition that it should be imputed to them when they should actually believe, Then it must be said that Christ hath paid for none till they believe, because it is His purpose and Covenant with the Father that doth make His sufferings to be accounted a price for any: and if so, then Faith cannot be said to be purchased contrary to what was formerly said. Beside, if none can be said to be redeemed but a Believer, Then it cannot be said, that Christ hath paid any thing in the name of any Reprobate, seeing he hath paid only for them who shall believe, which no Reprobate can do. Further, though the imputation of Christs laid-down price be conditional; yet the paying of it is absolute: for, He (according to this opinion) did really lay it down; and if such should after believe, there were need of paying no more in their name: Yea, what is actually laid down, is supposed to be equivalent to their Redemption, and with what is laid down for the Elect: otherwise, the price would not be proportioned to the supposed end, to wit, Redemption, and so it would be nothing.

That we may follow this conditional Redemption a little, It is otherwise in some things expressed by some others, thus, to wit, that Christ in some sense is a ransom for all; and yet not in that special manner as for His People: He hath brought others under the conditional Gospel-covenant, but them under the absolute: He hath according to the tenor of this Covenant procured salvation to all, if they will believe; but He hath procured for His chosen, even this condition of believing. Thus learned Baxter, in his *Saints Rest*, Part, 1. Pag. 153. which may be yet variously understood as to one branch thereof: for, though he doth there speak of all to be conditionally redeemed, and else where often hints this, yet by several expressions of his, it would seem to be restricted, at least, in a special manner to the visible Church: because, he saith these all, are by His death brought under the conditional Gospel-covenant, which elsewhere, (to wit, in the Appendix to his *Apophthegms*, pag. 241. in the last Edition) is acknowledged to be that which is revealed, and offered in the Church. And in that part of his *Saints Rest*, page 156. It is said, not to be offered to all; and that Expression is used by him, that the

conditional Covenant is made with all, at least, with the Church. Also others have many hints to this purpose, and the Learned Tisbe doth cite this saying out of *Vorsinus*, lib. præ. pag. 195. *Et sane nisi pro vocatis saltem omnibus, mortuus esset Christus, tum frustra hi omnes credere juberentur.* Therefore it will be meet to touch a little this Conditional Redemption, as it may relate to all men indifferently, and more particularly, as it may relate to the visible Church; and because of the nearness of the matter, and grounds thereof, both may be done as we go on. Although this opinion, as thus expressed, may seem more plausible; yet we conceive, that it will neither be found agreeable to the former grounds, nor to the Text, nor to reason, nor yet any way more conducing to remove, or prevent these difficulties which are supposed, to follow upon the Doctrine of particular Redemption, as it was formerly explained: for, first, what we urged from these Scriptures that speak but of one absolute Redemption, and do ever knit Justification and Life with Christs bearing the iniquity of any, or satisfying in their room, will also be binding here against this conditional Redemption. For, if any way Christ hath born their iniquity, Then they must be justified: otherwise, the former connexion, which is so strongly urged in the Scripture, with fail: or, if he hath not born their iniquity, nor paid any thing in their name, Then it cannot be said, that He hath any way died for them, or redeemed them. Secondly, The Text will confirm this, for, in it, all men are divided in these two ranks, to wit, the past-by body of Nations, and Kingdoms, &c. and these few that are redeemed out of these Tongues; Nations, &c. But this conditional Redemption can agree to neither member: Therefore, it cannot be admitted. It cannot be applied to the Redeemed who praise; for, they are all absolutely redeemed and made Kings and Priests to God, &c. nor will it agree to the past-by multitude of the un-redeemed that are contra-distinguished from the former; because, First, The place doth assert the actual enjoyment of friendship with God, (and being made Kings and Priests, &c.) to be the proper fruit of Christs blood and Purchase, and not the having of these things, made possible upon a condition, as was formerly laid down. Secondly, Because that past-by multitude, is expressly contra-distinguished from the redeemed, and these who partake of the benefits of Christs purchase: and therefore the one being called the Redeemed, the others may be called non-redeemed: and they are distinguished from, and opposed to the other here, nor by any distinction simply founded upon the effects of Christs death, to wit, that the one are made Kings and Priests, and the other not, but it looketh to the meritorious cause procuring these effects, and making them certain to the one, and leaving others without all title thereunto, to wit, Christs death; and so it is to be understood, *we are redeemed by thy blood*, that is, Thou hast paid the price of our Redemption in our name, by Thy blood, which hath not been done in respect of the multitude of these same Nations, whereof we are a part. Thirdly, There is but one Class of the Redeemed, and these are absolutely Redeemed, so there is but one Class distinguished from these, and these must be such who are no ways redeemed: For, what must be said of the one as to Redemption by Christs blood, must be denied of the other; for thus not to be amongst the redeemed, is indeed to be unredeemed. This will strongly militate against any who should restrict this conditional Redemption to the visible Church: for, that would make, upon the one side, two Classes of such as are redeemed, to wit, some absolutely and some conditionally to be such, whereas the Text doth acknowledge but one: and it would also constitute two Classes of the un-redeemed, to wit, some that are without the visible Church and conditional Covenant, and some that are within; whereas it is clear,

that these within the Church, who belong not to Christ, are equally contradistinguished from the redeemed with others that are without.

In the third place, This opinion will not be found consistent with reasons drawn from the Scripture, as, 1. It cannot be denied but Christs satisfaction and intercession must be of equal extent, seeing they are both parts of His Priestly Office; and it is His satisfaction that regulateth (to say so) His intercession; Now, it is clear in Scripture, that Christs intercession is qualified by Gods Decree of Election, therefore He prayeth, (*Joh. 17.*) *For those whom God hath given Him*: whereby it is not only implied, that He doth not pray for the world which were not given Him, but expressly He doth exclude them, *I pray not for the world*, saith He, *verse 9.* Therefore, it must be supposed, that He did no way die for the World, seeing He doth not pray for them; because He did not satisfie for them: and He did not satisfie for them, because they were not given unto Him. And we can no more say that there is a conditional satisfiing for, and redeeming of all, than we can say, that there is a conditional praying for all; and we cannot say, that there is a conditional intercession for all, seeing He doth so expressly, and absolutely exclude the Reprobate World from His Prayers; and upon that implied ground, because God did not own them as His, and had not given them to the Mediator to be owned and redeemed by Him, Therefore He doth solemnly disown them.

If it be said, that, in that place, our Lord Jesus doth onely pray for these who did actually believe? The very contrary will be found in the Text: for, (*Joh. 17. 20.*) He intercedeth for all who should after believe; and through the Chapter, for all these whom God had given Him. Beside, it were hard to say, that our Lord Jesus did comprehend all that were unrenewed under the title *world*; for so, many unrenewed Elect would have been excluded. Seeing therefore Christ excludeth the Reprobate World from His intercession, even when He includeth many unrenewed Elect then lying in profanity and nature, The former Argument doth bind the more strongly. From which also we may remove a second exception, to wit, that by *world* there are understood such as Christ fore-saw should reject the Gospel and continue members of this world, notwithstanding of His death and call, or such as did for that time violently reject the same. To this we say, that if Christ meant by *world*, present contemners and rejecters, then would many Elect be excluded, as is said. Again, if he understood such as He fore-saw would continue in opposition and unbelief to the end, Can it be reasonably thought that He would immediatly offer Himself in their room upon condition of their believing in Him, whom He did not only fore-see to continue in unbelief and never to perform that condition; but also whom He had instantly in express terms excluded from His prayers and intercession as having nothing to do with them? and so according to the former ground, to wit, that His intercession and satisfaction are of equal extent, they cannot be understood any way to come in under either of them.

If it be said, that His intercession respecteth only the efficacy of His death; and therefore must be bounded with the Elect: This will say, that this satisfaction also must respect that onely, seeing they are of equal extent. Again, why prayeth He only in reference to the efficacy? It is because He hath ground to own no more as Gods or His; and that will say, that He will not satisfie for them either. Lastly, He boundeth His dying and praying in these words, (*vers. 19.* of the forscited Chapter,) *for their sakes sanctifie I my self*, to wit, for their sakes for whom He prayed; in their room allannerly did He devote Himself to be a Sacrifice.

Secondly, In the first ground, laid down, we said, That Christs satisfaction, as to the object thereof, was to be regulated

by the Fathers proposal to Him; so that He died and satisfied for such, and such only as was proposed to Him. It being cleared there, that all were not proposed; therefore there is no warrant to say, that Christ in any respect, did bear the iniquity of any other. Neither can there be any end of His undertaking to pay for more than was proposed to Him; neither can it be thought, that any other was proposed to Christ, but such as were given to Him absolutely to be redeemed; because there is no word in Scripture that speaketh of proposing any to Christ to be bought, but the Elect, who, for that cause, are peculiarly named by this title, *those that were Christs own, and given to Him, &c.* If any should say, that they were conditionally given and proposed (which indeed must be supposed in this conditional Redemption) Then (beside what was said) it may be asked, If the Father, by proposing such, did intend their Redemption, and their obtaining of any benefit by Christs death? If He did, Why is it not effectual? If He did not, To what end was such a proposal made by the onely wise God? Again, we may conceive this conditional proposal to be thus upon the Fathers side, I do propose and give such and such persons to Thee that are not Elect, to be redeemed, and to partake of Thy Redemption, providing they shall believe, and I will absolutely exact the price from Thee, which yet is not to be imputed to them till they believe; and yet they cannot believe except God give the same freely, according to the first opinion: or, till Christ purchase the same, according to the second: yet (might He say) neither do I mind to give it to them, nor mind I to propose it to be bought by Thee for their use. This certainly would not look like the Wisdom, Sovereignty and Grace that do shine in the bargain of Redemption: yet, such a conditional proposal must be supposed as in these terms. And so they are proposed to the Mediator to be redeemed by Him, when yet the necessary mids, and supposed condition of their Redemption is never so much as proposed to be purchased, but the contrary is included; And so at the most, the Father proposeth but one part of their Redemption to the Market, to wit, the end without the mids: and therefore consequently, the Mediator must undertake for paying for the end, when He hath not the mids by which it is attained, made (to speak so) redeemable, because it is never offered to the market: and what wise man would make such a bargain?

Thirdly, It seemeth not consistent with reason and equity to say, that such as are by Gods Sovereign decree absolutely reprobated, and decerned to be made to reckon for their own sins; and yet to say, that our blessed Lord Jesus should have that debt imputed to Him, and thereby conditionally to purchase for them a freedom from that curse which is already determined to be executed justly upon them: for, the decree of Reprobation must be, even in order of nature, as soon as the decree of Election. Now, it being clear, that the Work of Redemption doth presuppose Election to have preceeded; so that in the order of nature, and according to our uptaking of things, we must conceive Gods absolute Electing of some to Eternal life, to be prior to the Covenant of Redemption, because these who are given to Christ in that Covenant, are said to be Gods own by virtue of that decree before that, *Joh. 17. 6.* which will infer that Gods absolute decree of Reprobation must be so also, seeing the decree of Election doth necessarily infer the decree of Reprobation; for, where there is an Election of some, there is a preterition of others. And therefore, we must say, that Christ conditionally had proposed to Him, and did conditionally pay according to that proposal, the debt of many, that by a prior decree were absolutely reprobated. And as to the last opinion hinted there being but one decree of Reprobation, It will follow that either all these must be under a conditional Redemption, which yet cannot be said so confidently, as to such who are without the conditional Covenant; or, all must be excluded therefrom.



Fourthly, From the grounds of this opinion, it may be thus argued; If Christ redeemed any Reprobate conditionally, then the performing of this condition is either in their own power, or it is a singular gift of God procured by Christs death. The first they will not assert, who own this opinion, as was formerly observed: Therefore it must be something that can no other wayes be procured but by Christs purchase. And according to what is said, it is not purchased to any Reprobate, though it be necessary for their obtaining of any benefit of Christs purchase. Therefore it cannot be said, that they are redeemed. For, at most it saith that they are redeemed upon a condition, which they can never possibly perform; and this will infer, That they are not redeemed at all: for, a peremptory exclusive conditional offer, where the condition is impossible, and known to be so to the offerer, is equippollent to an absolute refusal, as, suppose one would offer to relieve another from bondage, or to pay their debt for them; upon condition, and no other wayes, that such a person should at once drink up the whole sea; that offer so circumstantiated, could not be looked upon other wayes but as an absolute refusal. Again, if he hath not purchased Faith to them, then there is no saving grace purchased to them: and if neither Faith nor any saving Grace be purchased to them, it will be hard to say, that Christ hath died for such, for whom no saving Grace is purchased.

Fifthly, We say further, if all men be conditionally redeemed, then we must say that all the midses necessarily concurring in the Work of Redemption for making of it compleat, must be conditionally purchased also: for, as by the acknowledged ground, that is called absolute Redemption, wherein Faith and all the midses are absolutely purchased, so it will follow, that in this conditional Redemption all these midses must be conditionally purchased: for, the end and midses are in one bargain; where the one is purchased, the other is purchased; so where the one is absolutely purchased, the other is so also: and therefore where the one is conditionally purchased, the other must be so also: but it cannot be said, that the midses, to wit, Faith, Regeneration, and other Graces, are conditionally purchased, because this will be the sense thereof, that Christ hath purchased Faith in himself to such persons upon condition that they should believe in him: which, I suppose, none will affirm. It will follow therefore that they cannot be said to be conditionally redeemed, even as to the end.

Sixthly, If any conditional Redemption be supposed to be, or Christ be said to have payed the debt of all even conditionally, then this must be looked upon as a singular effect of Gods grace, and a special evidence of the excellent freeness thereof for provoking the hearts of all such to praise for the same: now, such a mould of conditional Redemption as is proposed, doth no way look like Grace, nor tendeth to the engaging of such as are so redeemed to bless and magnifie God: therefore it is not to be admitted. That it doth not look like Grace, will easily appear by considering, 1. that Grace is every way Grace, else it is no way Grace (according to an ancient saying of *Augustine*) that is, it is Grace in the end, and Grace in respect of the midses also. But here, whatever may be said of the end, sure there is no Grace in respect of the midses, seeing no necessary and effectual mids for attaining of the end, is provided for in this supposed bargain of conditional Redemption: Therefore it can neither be said to look like a bargain of Grace, nor yet to tend to the commendation thereof. 2. We may consider, that as to the effect or end, this bargain doth not make the same free unto these that are comprehended under it: for, it leaveth them to perform a condition for obtaining of the end, and that in their own strength without furnishing them for the performance of it, even though they be of themselves in an incapacity to perform the same: and how unlike this is to a Covenant of Grace, may easily be gathered. 3. This conditional Redemp-

tion, doth neither make the effect, supposed to be purchased, certainly nor possibly certain, because being it never certainly possible it is not, seeing it dependeth upon a condition, (which as it is circumstantiated) is simply impossible; and is supposed to be so in the Covenant of Redemption; for, one must look upon this condition, in respect of its possibility, not only with regard to men, as men endued with natural faculties; but we must look upon it with respect to men as they are in their corruption incorporated to do any thing that is spiritually good, such as this act of believing is. Now, in the Covenant of Redemption, it is supposed, not only that Faith is necessary, but also that man is corrupt, sold under sin, and so cannot of himself (except it be given him) believe: and yet in the same Covenant, it is agreed, that Faith be purchased and bestowed upon some, because of the former reasons; and even then, such who are supposed conditionally to be redeemed, are past by, and deliberately no such thing is capitulated for concerning them. Therefore the effect must, notwithstanding of this, be still impossible. And if so, Can it be said to be of Grace, which is so clouded in the terms thereof, and doth neither make any good possible to these who are comprehended in the same, nor give thorough occasion to glorifie grace as shining in the freedom, comfortableness and refreshfulness thereof: and in effect, it seemeth rather to obscure Grace, than to manifest the same; and therefore ought not to be pressed in the Church. For a conditional transaction in this mould, would be, as if one should be said to have paid the *Turkey* for so many slaves, to be sent home to him in such and such Ships, as himself only could send for them; and that this purchase should be valid, as to these slaves, upon condition altogether that they should return in such and such ships unto him; and yet in the mean time he never intend to send these ships for them; but in the same bargain conclude that ships should be sent only for such and such others; would not these slaves necessarily continue under their bondage? and, would this so be accounted a Redemption amongst men, or yet a wise conditional bargain? and is that to be attributed to the only wise and gracious God and our blessed Lord Jesus, which is, upon the matter the same? to wit, that our Lord Jesus should pay the debt of so many, upon condition that they should believe in him, by such Faith as he only can procure unto them; and withall, that in the same Covenant it should be expressly capitulated, that our Lord Jesus his sufferings should be accepted for procuring off Faith to some others altogether, and to none else; whereby these, supposed to be conditionally redeemed, are absolutely excluded upon the matter: this conditional Redemption therefore is not to be contended for.

Lastly, Besides these, this opinion will infer many absurdities and intricacies, not easily excusable, as First, If Christ Jesus hath died for all conditionally, Then it will follow, that either he died equally for all, or one way for some; and another way for others: to say, He died equally for all, is absurd, and acknowledged to be so by the Asserters of this opinion: and of this we spake in the former part of this Question. If it be said, that he did in a different manner die for the Elect, and for these that are not actually redeemed, Then it may be enquired, wherein this difference doth consist? for, it must either be in the matter, or price (to say so) that is given, to wit, that He gave more for those whom he absolutely redeemed, than for these whom he only did conditionally purchase; or, it must be in his intention in the laying down of his life, and in the Fathers will in ordering of the same, to wit, that it was not Christs intention, nor the Fathers will to bestow Faith upon such and actually to redeem them; and so to have his death accepted as a satisfaction for them; as he had condescended in respect of others: if the first be said, to wit, that Christ hath given more for the one nor for the other, then it will follow, that Christ hath



hath not satisfied for these, who are said to be conditionally redeemed, because he hath not paid sufficiently for them. Beside, it will not be found in Scripture, that Christ hath paid a part of the debt of any, where he hath not paid it all. If it be said, that the price, materially considered, was equal, then it will follow, that Christ suffered as much wrath and curse materially for *Judas* as he did for *Peter*; which will not look like the peculiarity of that love that appeareth in Christ's suffering for any, nor yet sound well to the thankful heart of a redeemed one; as if Christ had paid no more for him than for *Judas*. It is be said, that the difference is in Gods purpose, and Christs intention, who did design those sufferings to purchase Faith to the one, and so to make their Redemption effectual; which was not purposed in reference to the other. To this we say, 1. If the price laid down be equal in reference to all; then it would seem just that *Judas* should have no less fruit thereby than *Peter*, seeing no less was paid for him; But, 2. we say, That this Answer doth confirm our Argument; for, if it was not the purpose of the Father, and the Mediator, that the fruits of Christs death should be effectual to such and such, then Christs death cannot be called a satisfaction for such; because his death is regulated in its extent according to that purpose, and is a satisfaction for none, but such for whom it was purposed to be made effectual: for, to make it a satisfaction for any, not only is it necessary that there should be a sufficient price; but also that it should be intended to be paid and accepted, as such, for such and such persons: therefore, seeing it was not intended for them as such, they cannot any way be said to be redeemed by Christs death, seeing still the purpose and intention of the Parties contracting, is wanting, without which it can neither be a satisfaction, nor a Redemption, if it be said, that there was an intention to make a conditional redemption. *Ans.* This being understood as contradistinct from the absolute Redemption, as necessarily it must be, its as much as to say, that the Father and the Son in the Covenant of Redemption did intend for such and such persons, in stead of a conditional Redemption, a non-redemption, or, ineffectual redemption; and so it cometh to this, that their Redemption was never intended at all.

A second absurdity is, that this seemeth to imply a contradiction, to wit, that the Reprobate, whom God hath passed by, are redeemed by Christs death; yea, that the unredeemed are redeemed: For, if the redeemed be distinguished from others in this place, then those to whom they are opposed must be unredeemed. Neither can it be said, that the opposition is not *ad idem*, because the one are absolutely redeemed, and the other conditionally; for, upon the matter, the denying of an absolute and effectual Redemption, is the denying of any Redemption at all. Again, as to the first part; If any say, that though Christ died for all men, yet did he die for no Reprobate as a Reprobate: which some of late (even walking under the name of Orthodox) do assert, because it is absurd to say, that Christ died for any Reprobate. We answer, In Christs Redemption, the Elect are considered as Elect; for, them he redeemeth absolutely: Therefore, on the contrary, he must consider others as Reprobates, or at least as not Elect; and can any be considered as not Elect, but he must also be considered as a Reprobate, seeing there is not a mid? Therefore, either Christ must be said to redeem all men, without respect either to Election or Reprobation, which is false, because the Elect are in all the business of Redemption considered as such: or, he must be said to die for the Reprobates as Reprobates, which is the absurdity they would shift: or, it must be said, that in the laying down of his life, he had no respect to them under any consideration: which is the truth. For, the decree of Reprobation, being in order of nature, and according to our conception, prior to the decree and Covenant of Redemption, as was said, such as are contained therein, cannot but be looked

upon under that consideration. And, by the way it would not seem inconsiderable as to our purpose, to think, that before this transaction of Redemption were concluded (to speak according to our upraking of first and last in Gods purposes) he should determine concerning the ultimate estate of all men by his decrees of Election and Reprobation, and when marches are rid, and bounds, (never to be changed) set, then to come to the transaction of Redemption: Which certainly must suppose, that he intended not to confound the difference he had made by that first covenant, but thereby to provide a mean for making the decree of Election effectual; which was necessary for this, but not necessary as for the other.

A third absurdity, is, that this doth extend Christs death farther, and maketh it more common than the Scripture doth: for, in Scripture, Christ is said to die for his People, *Mat. 1. 21.* for his Sheep, *Joh. 10. 11, 15.* to gather the sons of God, *Joh. 11. 52.* for his own, *Joh. 17. 6,* with 19. and such like. And in this place, it is said to be for some of all *Kindreds, Tongues, and Nations*, and not for all indifferently. Now, according to this opinion, Christ may be said not only to die for his Sheep, but for all and every man, &c. There are two special objections against this. The first is, That although Christ be said to die for his Sheep, and to have redeemed some out of every Nation, &c. yet saith a late Learned Abettor of this opinion (to wit, *Dallaus* in his Apologie) that it will not follow; Because he died for these, therefore he died for no other; more than it will follow from *Pauls* word, *Gal. 2. 20.* He loved me and gave himself for me, therefore he did love and gave himself for no other. It is said, that Learned men should so please themselves, to shift Arguments: for certainly, a clear difference may be observed between *Pauls* saying, *Christ gave his life for me*, and between Christs saying, *I laid down my life for my Sheep*: this doth expressly hold forth Christs differencing of these for whom he was to die, and his contradistinguishing of them from others who were not of his Sheep, nor given to him; and therefore for them he was not to lay down his life; whereas that word of *Pauls*, is not spoken to contradistinguish him from any other Believer, but to comfort himself in the application of that truth to himself, that Christ who died for his Sheep, did also lay down his life for him as one of them. Again, when Christ speaketh of his People, of his Sheep, and of his own in this case, he doth particularly (to say so) consider them as a species or kind of people by themselves, and differenced, in the respect mentioned, from others, as the scope cleareth: but when *Paul* speaketh of himself in the application foresaid, will any think that he speaketh of himself as differenced from all, and not rather as an individual of the species foresaid? therefore although we may conclude thus, God hath made man a reasonable creature according to his own Image, therefore no other creature is such, because, by this qualification, man, or that species (to say so) is differenced from all other creatures on earth; yet, it will not follow, *Peter* is a reasonable creature according to Gods Image, therefore no other man is so: because, *Peter* is but an individual person under the same species with others. Just so is it here, Christs Sheep, own, People, &c. denote a species, as it were, differenced by such relations from others, whereas *Paul* is but an individual Believer comprehended under the same.

A second Objection, is, That many other Scriptures do assert Christ to be given, and to have laid down his life for the World: therefore it cannot be absurd to say, that in some sense Christ hath redeemed all: and particularly that place, *Joh. 3. 16.* is urged for our scope suffereth us not to differ to more, to wit, *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son: that whosoever should believe in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.* In reference to which place, we say, 1. That the scope is not to shew, that Christ was given for



for all the world taken distributively, that is, for every person that should be in the world, because it is only brought in here to confirm this general sum of the Gospel which is laid down, *vers. 15. That whosoever believeth in Christ, should not perish but have eternal life.* Now *vers. 16.* is brought in as a confirmation of this; (for saith he) *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, for this very end, That whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have eternal life.* Where Gods end in giving of his Son, is mentioned to be a ground of quietness to all that should believe, and will hear that Universal well, *whosoever believeth are redeemed*, and may expect the benefits of Christs Redemption; because the justifying and saving of such, was the end for which God sent his Son: and to extend the place any further, will not be consistent with the scope thereof. If it be said, that Gods respect and love to the world indefinitely, is mentioned here; Be it so, yet that will not infer, that because he had respect to the world, that therefore he intended that Christ should die for all and every individual person in the world; but, it will only infer this much at most, as if we said, in common speech, such a Christian King, or potent man had such a respect to Christians, or to men of such a Nation, as to send such a great sum to redeem so many of them as he particularly condescended upon, from the bondage of the *Turks*: it may well be said, that such a great man had respect to Christians or to such a Nation, because he purposed to redeem many of them when he took no thought of others: yet it cannot be said, that he intended the redeeming of all, either absolutely or conditionally, seeing he did appoint the price given to be paid for such and such as himself thought meet to redeem, and not for others: Just so is it here in this case, at the most; and so Gods respect to the world, may be opposite to his passing by of all the fallen angels. Again, secondly, we say, that if *World*, in this place, be to be understood of particular persons, and an universality of them, it must be understood of the Elect World, as in the Verse following is clear, where Gods purpose of sending his Son, is expressed to be; *that the world through him might be saved.* Now, there can no other universality be thought to be intended, to be saved by God (as was formerly cleared) but the Universality (to speak so,) or, the World of the Elect. Neither will the reading be absurd, to understand it thus, That God so loved the Elect World, that he gave his only begotten Son to death for them, that by their believing on him they should not perish, but have eternal life. And so this place will be interrupted by the parallel thereof, *1 John 4. 9. In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him: for, us and we, in the one place, are equipollent to the world and whosoever will believe, in the other.* That thus it is to be understood, appeareth in this, that even according to the grounds of this opinion there can none be expected to believe but the Elect; and in the Text, there are none profited by this fruit of Christs love to the world, but the Believers: therefore this love, which giveth this gift, must be said to respect the Elect only, especially considering, that it is in a matter which is the evidence of Gods most special love, as was formerly said. Only, it is expressed in this general, *whosoever shall believe, &c.* because the extending of it, in this indefinite expression, doth sure best with the proposed mould of the offer of the Gospel, which is not to invite men to believe, because they are particularly elected; or redeemed; but to invite men to believe, because God hath promised to save such as believe, and because he doth by the outward Ministry call hearers thereunto. And this is the more to be observed, because Christ here, as a good Minister of the Gospel, is preaching to *Nicodemus*, and laying before him the sum of the Gospel, and that which must be the object of his faith; and therefore it was necessary that he should take that way of pre-

aching these truths to him, so that as upon the one side he doth hold forth Gods peculiar respect to the Elect World; so, upon the other, he doth hold forth Gods acceptance of all who ever shall believe, that the peculiarity of the Redemption may not stumble any in their approaching to Christ, who have the offer of the Gospel made unto them: for, the Word saith in sum, a Believer cannot fail of Salvation, seeing God had that respect to his Elect, as to give his only begotten Son to purchase this unto them: and this is to be preached in these indefinite terms, &c. cannot but be true, seeing it is the revealed will of God.

A fourth difficulty following this opinion, is, That it will be hard to conceive how Christ could conditionally die and lay down his life for the redeeming of many who were actually already condemned in hell; yet, this Universal conditional Redemption will infer this, otherways the Reprobates, who lived before Christs death, were not so much obliged to him as these who did succeed. If it be said, that although Christ actually died in time, yet the transaction was eternal before any man lived in the world. This will not remove the difficulty, because, though it was transacted before time; yet, no question, it was so regulated as it might be performed in time. Now can it be supposed that the transaction was in these terms, that the Mediator should die and lay down a price for so many Elect, who by the vertue of his death were to be brought to Glory before his sufferings; and that also he should pay so much in the name of so many Reprobates, who for their own sins were to be actually damned at the time of payment? And whatever be said of the transaction, yet when it came to Christs suffering, it must either be said, that these were scored out, so as Christ did not bear their iniquity, or die for them in any respect; or, it must be said, that before Gods Justice, Christ did bear the iniquity, and pay in the name of such as were actually in hell, suffering for their own sins at that same instant of time.

Fifthly, It may be asked, what doth become of all infants, whether in the Visible Church, or without it, who die in their infancie? According to the former grounds, it will be hard to determine: for, none can say, upon the one side, that they are all absolutely redeemed and saved, there being no warrant in Scripture for this; on the other side, to say, that Christ died for them, upon condition that they should believe in him, cannot be well understood: for, though some of them be within the conditional Covenant made with the Church, and therefore cannot be more rigidly constructed of than these at age; yet are they not in a capacity to perform acts of Faith, and to fulfill that condition; and this incapacity doth not merely flow from mens corruption, as it doth in men at age; but is natural to young ones, as not to understand, speak, or walk, are: now, it were unreasonable to say, that such children who die in their infancie, were redeemed by Christ, upon condition that they should understand, speak, walk, &c. or, of a child dying in such a condition (suppose it be one not absolutely redeemed) it cannot be said, that that child was redeemed upon this condition, that it had walked, spoken, &c. when as yet it was not (possibly) of one hours age. Again, can it be said of children within the Visible Church, which are not absolutely redeemed, that it is indeterminable whether Christ did die conditionally for them, or not, at least till they come to such an age as they themselves may act Faith? neither can it be said here, that he redeemed Reprobate children in the Church conditionally, as he did absolutely redeem these that are Elect, although even these cannot act Faith: for, he purchaseth to the Elect saving Grace in the seed thereof, and a new nature to be communicated to them, whereof the youngest children are capable, seeing therein they are merely passive; but in that conditional Redemption, there is nothing purchased so any but upon condition that they receive Christ offered and believe in him; which doth suppose an activeness, and acting to be in these

these to whom the offer is made : of which, children are not capable. And if this condition could be supposed only to infer some thing wherein children might be merely passive, then this will be the meaning thereof, to wit, that Christ redeemed such children upon condition that He Himself should confer such & such things on them, in receiving of which, they could only be passive: which would not look like a conditional Covenant; for, the performing of the condition will be on Christs side, and not upon theirs: and so it would be absolute as in the case of the Elect children. Neither will it remove this difficulty, to say, that children are partakers of the fathers privileges, and are to be reckoned accordingly : for, this cannot be said of saving privileges, so as if no Elect parent could have a Reprobate child; or, no Reprobate parent, an Elect child dying at such an age; because these things belong unto the Sovereignty of God, and He is not so to be bounded in respect of all particular children. Beside, experience in the Word giveth ground to us to call it in question. It must then be understood only of federal privileges, and that in respect of the external administration of the Covenant: and this will say nothing to the difficulty; because the doubt is still, what to say of children that are within the conditional Covenant in respect of their parents, that are within the Visible Church; yet, supposing them to die instantly, or in their nonage, they cannot be said to be conditionally redeemed, because of the reasons foresaid.

Sixthly, If the Reprobate be conditionally redeemed, Then that Redemption of theirs is either transacted in the same Covenant with the absolute Redemption of the Elect, or not. they cannot be said to be comprehended within the same Covenant, because all such as are comprehended in it, are contradicting-wished from others, as *being the Lords chosen, and such as are given to Christ, &c.* Again, this Covenant of Redemption includeth the means with the end; for, it is ordered in all things and sure; which cannot be said of this conditional Covenant: Therefore they cannot be comprehended in one. And it would not sound well, to say, that the Elects Redemption, and that of the Reprobates, were contained in one Covenant. Nor can it be said, that it is a distinct bargain beside the Covenant of Redemption: Because, 1. That were indeed to grant that it is no Redemption, seeing it is not comprehended in the Covenant of Redemption. 2. The business of Christs death, is only transacted in that Covenant, where the Redemption of the Elect is absolutely concluded; because it is the great mids designed for making of that effectual: therefore ought it, as to the extent of its merit, to be proportioned to the object of that Covenant, seeing by His undertaking therein alarnerly, He becometh liable to death. 3. This would infer two Covenants of Redemption, whereas the Scripture doth but speak of one. And although some speak of a conditional Covenant with the visible Church; yet, neither can that be said to be made with all men, and so none without the visible Church should be redeemed; neither can that be called a Covenant of Redemption, distinct from that which is made in reference to the Elect; because nothing can be counted a Covenant of Redemption, even a conditional Covenant, but that wherein God and the Mediator are parties; for, no other can determine absolutely or conditionally upon the business of Redemption. Beside, what is revealed to the visible Church, and hath the form of a conditional Covenant, doth but flow from this, as the administration, application, or execution thereof: and therefore cannot be thought to contain any new article concerning the extent or fruit of Christs death, but must be regulated by the former, and is not to be looked upon as a distinct Covenant in itself.

The last thing which we have to say, is, that this mould of a conditional Redemption of all men, doth not bring with it any more solide way to satisfy or remove the difficulties that are pretended to follow the former. And indeed the way of

grace being a mystery and depth which is unsearchable, and the giving of Christ unto death being the most mysterious part of all this mystery; what wonder is it that carnal reason cannot reach the grounds of the Lords sovereign proceeding therein? and what presumption may it be thought to be to endeavour such a mould of this, as may mar the mysteriousness thereof, and satisfy reason in all its proud Objections? Yet, we say, this will not do it; for, First, it doth not prove any way more conduceable for the glorifying of grace in respect of these who are conditionally redeemed, as was formerly shown, but rather the contrary. Nor doth it conduce any more to the quieting and comforting of wakened Consciences, (whereof also something was spoken) nor doth it any way tend to make Reprobate sinners more inexcusable, as if thereby the justice of God were more clearly vindicated: for, by this Doctrine, He did not redeem them absolutely, neither did purchase Faith unto them, without which, even according to this conditional Covenant, they cannot be saved; and yet they can no more obtain Faith of themselves except by His purchase, than they can by themselves satisfy Divine Justice, had He not by His death interposed. Now may not carnal reason still cavil here, and say, that though Christ hath died and purchased them conditionally, yet seeing He hath not purchased Faith to them, their Salvation is no lesse impossible, than if there had been no such conditional Redemption at all. Neither can it be ever instanced, that this meer conditional Redemption did profite any person as to life, or any saving good, more than if it had not been at all: and so the matter upon which the pretended cavil doth rise, is but altered, but no way removed.

Secondly, Seeing, the asserters of this conditional Redemption do admit of an absolute Election unto life as we do, (at least, for ought I know) then they will have the same cavils to meet with: for, the connexion betwixt Election, Faith, and Salvation, is no lesse peremptory, so that none can believe and be saved, but an Elect) than the connexion is betwixt Christs dying for one and his obtaining of Salvation; yea, the connexion is no lesse peremptory, and reciprocal (to say so) betwixt absolute Redemption and life, and betwixt meer conditional Redemption and Damnation (to speak of a connexion simply without respect to any causality) and that according to their grounds, than there is betwixt Redemption and life, and non-redemption and death, according to the grounds which we maintain: yet, I suppose, that none will account this absolute Election of some few, when others are past-by, to be any spot upon the sovereign and free grace of God; or yet any ground of excuse to such as are not thus Elect by Him: and yet without this, (as to the event,) it is certain, that they can never believe nor attain unto Salvation; yea, supposing that Election were grounded upon foreseen Faith, and supposing Reprobation to be grounded upon foreseen sin, and impenitency therein; yet, now both these Decrees being peremptorily and irrevocably past, this is certain, that no other will or shall be saved but such as are so Elect: and so that all others, to whom the offer of the Gospel cometh, shall necessarily perish, or, the former Decree must be cancelled, which is impossible; and this is true, although it be past (as they say) *voluntate consequente*. Now when the offer of the Gospel cometh, may not carnal minds raise the same cavil, and say, seeing the Lord foreknew that such and such would not believe, and for that cause did determine to glorify His Justice upon them; to what end then is this offer made to such, who are now by a Decree excluded from the same, what ever be the ground thereof? and indeed there is no end of cavilling, if men will give way unto the same: for, flesh will ask, even in reference to this, *why doth he then find fault? and who hath resisted his will?* for certainly if He had pleased, he might have made it otherwise; and seeing He pleased not to do so, Therefore it could not be otherwise, as the Apostle hath it,



Rev. 9. 19. unto which he giveth no other answer, but, *Nay, Q. who is it that replieth against God? shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? hath not the potter power over the clay? &c.* in which also we must acquiesce: otherwise no such mould of a conditional Redemption will give satisfaction.

Thirdly, It can no more warrand the application of the fruits of Christs purchase to any, so as to comfort them in this conditional Redemption; more than if there were no such thing at all: for, if the inner believe, the Doctrine of particular Redemption doth warrand any to make application of Christs purchase: if they believe not, this Doctrine of conditional Redemption giveth no more warrand to make application for the comfort of any than if it were not at all.

Fourthly, Neither doth it warrand a person with any greater boldnesse to take hold of Christ, or to close with the offer of the Gospel made unto him: because that person, who is jealous to close with Christ, upon this ground, because he knoweth not whether he be redeemed by Him or not, seeing all are not redeemed, may be no lesse jealous upon this account, because he knoweth not if by His death he hath procured Faith to him; briot, and so if he be absolutely redeemed; for this is no lesse necessary for his peace and confidence than the former; and yet will be as difficult to be known, to any that will needs search into what is secret; and not rest upon the revealed offer of God as the sufficient ground and object of their Faith. And if only by actual believing, and no otherwise, they may be assured that Faith is purchased unto them; by the same ground also, may they be cleared that they are redeemed by Christ; yea, and Elect also; because there is an equal peremptory connexion betwixt Faith and all these.

Fifthly, Neither doth this way and the grounds thereof give Ministers any more solide ground to make the offer of the Gospel indefinitely in their publick Preaching: for, by the truth formerly laid down, we can assure Hearers that whosoever believeth shall partake of life and of the benefits of Christs Redemption; and by vertue of the general Call and Warrant which we have in the Gospel, we may invite them to believe in Christ, require Faith of them; and upon condition thereof, assure them of pardon, &c. because the nature of the administration of the Covenant of Redemption is such in plain terms, to wit, that whosoever believeth shall be saved. Also, the nature of our Commission to preach this Gospel, doth fully import the same, as it is summed, *Mark 16. 15, 16.* for Ministers warrand to Preach and offer Salvation, is not to Preach and offer the same to the Elect only; whom the Lord hath kept secret from them; but it is to Preach and make offer of this Gospel, to these unto whom the Lord shall send them, and whom He shall gather into a visible Church-state. Yet, this is done for the Elects sake among such, whom God hath thought fit to gather out among others by this Preaching of the Gospel, without signifying to the Minister who is Elect, and whom He hath designed to believe: therefore it is suitable to this manner of administration, that the Gospel be preached indefinitely in respect of its call, and that indifferently, as to these who Preach; that so while the call doth reach all particularly, the Elect may with all be gripped with the same. And, upon the grounds of this conditional Redemption, others can do no more, but publish the offer of the Gospel indefinitely, and assure any who shall believe in Christ, that they shall thereby obtain life and pardon. It is true, we cannot say that Christ hath died and satisfied for them all to whom we Preach; yet that doth not lessen our warrand to call Hearers indifferently on the terms of believing; because, though Christs Redemption be the ground which hath procured this Gospel to be Preached even in these terms, as from that forecited place, *Joh. 3. 16.* may be gathered: and though it be that which boundeth the Lords making of Preaching effectual; yet our Commission is bounded according to the

express terms in which it hath pleased the Lord to draw up the same unto us: because the transaction of Redemption, as it relates to the names of the redeemed, is a secret, begetting God and the Mediator. Therefore the Book of Life is never opened until the day of Judgement. *Rev. 20.* But a Ministers Commission in his Treating with sinners in the visible Church, is a thing which He hath thought good to reveal: and therefore hath done it so, as the former secret may not be revealed; and yet the end be made effectual, to wit, the effectual calling, and in-gathering of so many Elect. And upon the other side, these who may require Faith of all, and plead it of them, upon this ground, that they are conditionally redeemed; yet they cannot say to their Hearers, that Christ hath by His death procured Faith to them all, and so they leave them still at a losse except they betake them to the external indefinite call, which doth warrand Ministers to require Faith of all Hearers indifferently; & that without disputing whether Christ hath redeemed all or not; or whether by His Redemption He hath procured Faith to them all or not: because, Faith is a duty, and is called for warrantably by vertue of that call, as is said; and this we do in so far acknowledge. And so in sum, their warrand to Preach the Gospel indefinitely, and pers, is found to be of the same extent, and to be founded upon the same general call. Therefore there needeth not be much contending for a different Doctrine, or (as some call it) a different method to derive this warrand from, which doth so natively flow from the received truth. And though the Scripture doth sometimes use this motive indifferently to the members of the visible Church, to stir them up to glorifie God, to wit, that they are bought with a price, as *1 Cor. 6. 20.* Yet will not that infer an universal or conditional Redemption of them all, more than these places immediately going before, *Jer. 13. and 19.* where it is said, that they are members of Christ, and temples of the holy Ghost; will infer an universal or conditional regeneration of them all: the first whereof, is false; the second, is absurd: for so it would be upon the matter, that they were renewed, sanctified, and had the Spirit dwelling in them, upon condition that it were so; seeing Regeneration, the spirit, and Faith (which is a fruit of the Spirit) cannot be separated. The like phrases also are, *Chap. 3. of the same Epistle, vers. 16, 17, &c.* Beside, will any think that when the Apostle saith, *ye are bought with a price, &c.* that he doth only intend that conditional Redemption which can never be effectual, but he must be understood as having respect to that great mercy in its most peculiar respect; because he doth speak of it to the Elect as well as others, and that as having with it the greatest obligation that can be?

Lastly, It cannot be thought that this mould of a conditional Redemption so qualified, can be more acceptable to these who plead for an indifferent or equal universal Redemption: because this doth not any while remove their objections, whereby they plead for nature against the sovereignty of God; nor answer their cavills, whereby they rest upon the Justice of God, for condemning men who cannot possibly (according to the case they are in) be saved. Therefore there is still ground for them to plead mans excusableness, seeing his salvation, even according to these grounds, is still impossible, as hath been formerly cleared. Neither, I suppose, will it be intimated, that any holding the Socinian, Arminian, or Unitarian principles in these things, have been brought to judge more favourably of that way, than of the other. But on the contrary, may be strengthened, or rather stumbled by this, to continue in their former errors, as finding many orthodox Divines in part to yield, because of the supposed strength of their Arguments; and from such concessions they have some ground given to make their conclusions the more strong; for this conditional Redemption doth allege, that there is need to vindicate Gods Justice, and to declare mans Inexcusableness, and to have clearer

clearer grounds of dealing with men for bringing them to Faith, &c. than can be consistent with the principles that are ordinarily maintained by the Orthodox in that point; and seeing by the length which this conditional Redemption doth go, such ends are not attained, (as hath been formerly hinted) Therefore it will follow that even more than that is necessary, and so that there can be no halting till it be their length. Also it must stumble and strengthen them not a little, to find orthodox Divines taking up and managing their Arguments, and by their weapons, beating down down the Answers which hitherto have been made thereto, and to see them also enervating the Arguments which have been brought against them by homologating of their Answers. Sure *Cameron* (the Author of this method) went as far in several points to alley the heat of *Arminians* and others against this Doctrine, as any; yet, *Episcopus* in his dealing with him, doth load his way with no lesse absurdities, nor doth any while inveigh lesse bitterly against him than against others whom he dealt with; yea, in some respect he doth insist more, as alleaging his way to be more inconsistent with reason and with it self, than the way of others; because

still, *Cameron* did assert the absoluteness of Election, the efficacy of Grace in Conversion, and the impossibility of frustrating the same (when God doth apply it to effectuate Conversion,) or to convert themselves without it, though he endeavoured to maintain these things upon grounds different from what are commonly made use of. We conclude then, That these who are redeemed, are peculiarly obliged to Christ more than any other; and yet that no other hath any just ground to quarrel with Him; this being certain, that though the reasons of His proceeding may sometimes be unknown to us, yet can they never be unjust. And there is no question, but these who dispute most against His way, now, shall in the day of Judgement have their mouths stopped, when their Consciences shall convincingly bear witness of the justice of all the Lords proceeding in this work of Redemption, and even in their own condemnation. But, who can search in these depths? O, the depths of the riches both of the Knowledge and Wisdom of God! O, how unsearchable are His wayes, and His judgements past finding out! To Him be praise for ever. Amen.

## LECTURE I.

### CHAP. VI.

Verf. 1. **A**ND I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts, saying, Come, and see.



His Chapter beginneth that part of this Book which is properly and mainly propheticall. We heard of the preparation to it in the former two Chapters; serving not only to stir up *John*, but all that should hear or read, to observe the things that should be revealed. Followeth now the first prophesie to be spoken of, which is manifested to the Church

by our Lords opening the seals of the Book: But it will be needful to premise some generals, before we enter on particulars.

1. Touching our way of proceeding. 2. Concerning the object, and scope of the prophesies. 3. Concerning the series and order of them. 4. Some generals observable about them, for the better understanding of them.

1. For our way of proceeding, we say, 1. That this being an obscure place, and interpretations being many and different, we must have liberty sometimes to propound these that be most probable; that out of them we may take what is safest, seeing among three expositions (when a fourth cannot be given) the overthrowing of two, is an establishing of the third. 2. There must be more use made of humane History, and citing of mens names than ordinary, seeing the resolving of a prophesie is in an History: and there is no Scripture-story posterior to this. Use then must be made of others, as in the expounding of *Danial* is needful. 3. We intend not to be particular, or peremptory in ascribing or limiting applications to times, cases, or persons; seeing the same expression may be more comprehensive than only to take in one event, or look to one party or person, it may take in others also; it may therefore sute as well with the scope to comprehend both, when the things included do not overturn one another. 4. Neither will it be meet, where consistent and subordinate senses offer, to adhere to one of them, when it may be as safe to take in both.

2. For the object and scope of this prophesie, we conceive

it to be mainly to set out what concerneth the Church; and occasionally to touch any other thing as may serve to that end; for, it is sent for the behove of our Lord Jesus His Servants, to arm them against trials, to keep them from being offended with them, and to comfort them under them; beside, that God is not in this whole Book (as in the former vision) looked on as in His Government simply, but in reference to His Church chiefly: so it is His Churches sufferings, battels, victories, and others as they are enemies to her, or fighting with her, that are spoken to. 2. Because the Church was especially within the bounds of the Romane Empire, that then did almost command the world, and because they were most manifestly friends or enemies to her; and the affairs of that Empire being of most concernment to the Church, there is mention made sometimes more especially of it. 3. Antichrist being the great, and lasting enemy, and most dangerous to Gods People, and yet pretending to be no enemy; the holy Ghost therefore insisteth most in that particular, (describing, discovering, and pointing him out in his rise, his followers or Church, his reign and ruine) that Believers may be especially guarded against him, and that Christs Church and People may be discerned from Antichrists Church, people, or followers. 4. It is not purposed particularly to hold forth every dispensation in the Church, or all changes befalling it, or happening to it, but the special and main ones, most needful and useful to be known, and understood by the Church; therefore whileas other prophesies are more general, this concerning Antichrist, is specially, particularly and at length insisted on, as if the Lord intended especially by this prophesie to meet with him.

3. For the series of the Story, this is certain, the state of the Militant Church is holden forth from that time to the end of the World, but how it is, there is difference. There are three opinions specially in this, 1. Some would carry on the Story in an even line by an uninterrupted series, knitting every Chapter



at the back of another; as if the Chapters kepted the order of time, till it come to the end: But this will no wayes consist with the matter contained in these Chapters, especially Chap. 12, 13, 14, which certainly is contemporary with and explicatory of the former visions, and so are Chap. 17, 18. 2. Some make all these visions to begin and end together, as if in each of them were a full prophesie, extending from the beginning of this Revelation to the end of the World. But this will not hold in the principal prophesies, as will appear. 3. Some divide it in two Books; the first, closed, Chap. 5. the second, opened, Chap. 10. and that these two have two prophesies beginning alike, & ending at the end of the World. But it is certain that that Book, (Chap. 5.) containeth all; for, it containeth the seven seals; they contain the seven trumpets; the seventh trumpet is not blown till Chap. 11. and certainly it containeth the vials, which are the last woes and plagues. 4. We may adde a fourth opinion as a kind of midst, that is, that neither is there a continued series amongst all the prophesies, nor yet are all the visions, or the three principal prophesies contemporary; but that the three principal prophesies, to wit, of the *seals*, *trumpets* and *vials*, continue the series from the beginning to the end, and are not contemporary, properly; but that the explicatory visions, though they be not contemporary one with another, yet are they contemporary with these, or some part of these principal prophesies, That is, 1. The seals preceed. 2. The trumpets succeed. 3. After follow the vials, and that immediately, and these carry it on till the end.

If we consider the matter contained in this Revelation, it may not unfittly be divided in two parts, each of them giving a view of the whole from the beginning to the end; with this difference, that what is more shortly and obscurely pointed at in the one, is more largely and plainly insisted on in the other, : for, (from Chap. 6. to the end of the 11. inclusively) there is a view given of affairs concerning the Gospel-church unto the end. And such-like, (from Chap. 12. *initio*, to the end of this Book,) a review is given of the same extent, to wit, from the first spreading and rise of the Gospel, unto the end of the World: wherein what was more shortly hinted at concerning Antichrist, his rise, and ruine, by the fifth and seventh trumpets, Chap. 9, and 11. is more largely and fully insisted on, from Chap. 13. and forward: So that, upon the matter, this division seemeth not impertinent. Yet, considering the native form in which these prophesies and visions are delivered, and the special periods of the Militant Church, which are by special events remarkable, and of which the holy Ghost taketh particular notice by beginning, and breaking off purposes at them, by continuing one form of expression (to wit, by the same types of *seals*, *trumpets*, or *vials*) until such a period run out, and then altering, and proposing the succeeding matter in a different form, and under different types, as altering from *seals* to *trumpets*; and then again, when a new period cometh, altering to *vials*. Considering these things, we conceive, that the dividing of this Book in principal and expository prophesies, and subdividing each of these again in three, will conduce most for a distinct and clear up-taking of the matters revealed, and fute best with the form wherein it is delivered; and by which also of it self it is divided, as will more fully appear in our proceeding. And so the order and series of the prophesies of this Book, are thus to be conceived,

The whole Revelation, as propheticall, is contained in that Book sealed with seven seals, Chap. 5. The six first seals, being opened, deduce the story to one period, to wit, to the end of the Heathen persecution, and the quieting of the Church from that. The seventh seal bringeth in the trumpets, Chap. 8, and 9. which contain the story of the Churches trouble by intestine enemies, until Antichrist be at his height. The seventh Chapter containeth no other matter, but is cast in betwixt the first principal prophecy and the second, to make way for the more

clear passing from the one to the other; and especially to prepare for, and help to understand the prophesie of the trumpets Chap. 10. and 11. contain a consolation for the Church in reference to that sad condition. Then in Chap. 12, 13, and 14. is inserted an explicatory prophesie belonging to that same time, & conducing both for clearing the two prophesies preceeding, and also that of the *vials* following. Then cometh the third principal prophesie of the vials, which hath its preparation, Chap. 15. its execution, Chap. 16. and is enlarged and explained in the two last explicatory prophesies, Chap. 17, 18, &c. unto the end of the Book.

Concerning these three principal prophesies, to wit, 1. Of *seals*, Chap. 6. 2. Of *trumpets*, Chap. 8, 9. 3. Of *vials*, Chap. 16. Observe,

1. They have all Prefaces, or preparations, before them with songs for up-stirring of the Reader at the entry, Chap. 4, and 5. are preparatory to the prophesie of the *seals*, Chap. 6. Chap. 7. is preparatory to the *trumpets* which follow, Chap. 8, and 9. Chap. 15, to the *vials*, which are comprehended, Chap. 16.

Obs. 2. That all of them have their consolation and explication intermixed with them, or added, relating unto them. Thus the consolation of the Church, against the persecution, intimated by the second, third, and fourth seals, is added in that same Chapter by the fifth and sixth seals: and the explication which is contemporary with it, is in Chap. 12. *viz.* the first part of it. The consolation laid down in reference to the trumpets, is, Chap. 10, 11. And the explication of them, (for, both the difficulty, and consolation, are expounded) is, Chap. 12. last part, with Chap. 13, 14. The vials are of themselves consolatory, being against the Churches enemies; yet are they particularly explained, and insisted on from Chap. 17. to the end.

Obs. 3. That each of these prophesies have something inserted in them, which as a key may serve both for the understanding of the meaning of them, and timing of the thing contained in them. This key, is especially to be found in the consolatory part of each principal prophesie, it being not one of the least consolations to understand them. 4. It is to be observed, That every one of them is linked in, with, and to another, so as the last seemeth to infer a new period; as the seventh seal bringeth the trumpets, the seventh trumpet bringeth the vials, the seventh vial again seemeth to look to an interval after the beasts destruction before the day of Judgement, and to relate to that vision, Chap. 20. or, at least, to a chief part thereof; so that looking to the principal prophesies in themselves, there are but three periods of the Militant Church; but as the seventh vial containeth somewhat new, and singularly different from the former, there are four. Thus, the Churches estate is either suffering; and that, 1. under Heathen persecutors: this relateth to the seals, and is the first period. Or, 2. it is torn and wasted under Hereticks and Antichrist: this is holden forth by the trumpets, and is the second. Or, 3. it is aspiring to an outgate from these in a more wrestling and fighting way, gaining ground against Antichrist, from his begun fall to his ruine, by degrees: which is held forth by the first six vials, and that is the third. Or, 4. it is more quiet after his ruine: which taketh in that interval and Kingdom; Chap. 20. I mean that eminent part thereof that falleth under the seventh vial, and that is the fourth. In sum the whole state of the Militant Church, may be divided in two, 1. in a condition, more suffering; Or, 2. more prosperous. Each of which again, may be sub-divided. Her suffering condition, in two, 1. under Heathens; 2. under Antichrist. Her prosperous condition again, may be considered, as it is begun and fighting, or more quiet, after her eminent enemy Antichrist is down: which, in all, make four periods. But because this last of the Churches quiet condition seemeth not to be of such continuance as any of the former, it is not set down by distinct types as they

they are; and therefore the whole estate of the Church runneth most in three periods according to the principal prophecies of *seals, trumpets, and vials*. By *period* in this discourse, understand one continued way of dispensation unto the Church, till by some new intervening change it be broken off, as, the alteration from heathen persecutors and heathen persecution from without, unto intestine persecutions and troubles from within, and the like. That this series may be clear (which we will find agreeable to the nature of, and matter contained in, these prophecies, to history, in what is past, and to reason drawn from solid grounds in the Book it self;) we shall lay down these following propositions, to make out, that these three principal prophecies are not contemporary to each other, and do not deduce the state of the Gospel-church severally from her beginning to the end of the world: and also to make out, that these explicatory prophecies do not belong to any distinct time, different from the former, but are to be understood as contemporary with them, or some part of them.

*Propos. 1.* These principal prophecies, are not contemporary one with another, in this respect, as if each of them did hold forth a view of the whole Gospel-church from the beginning to the end of the World, as may appear, 1. by the genuine order that is amongst the *seals, trumpets, and vials*. The *trumpets* are comprehended under the seventh seal: and therefore cannot be contemporary with the former six, except we say the last were contemporary with the first; which is absurd; for the second is not so contemporary with the first, nor the third with the second. Likewise, the *vials* are comprehended under the seventh trumpet, as will be clear, *Chap. 11.* when the seventh trumpet is expounded: and therefore cannot be contemporary with the former six trumpets, upon the foregoing reason. This argument presseth the more strongly; because, if there be order of time amongst the events, comprehended under the first six seals, so that the following seal comprehendeth matter, in time succeeding the former, Then must the seventh seal contain matter, succeeding in time to the sixth, as the sixth did to the fifth: But the former is true, there is order amongst the first six seals, to wit, the *white horse* cometh by the first, bloody persecution followeth in the second; and so forth one succeedeth another, as will be clear by the exposition of them; and therefore the seventh must succeed the sixth, except we overturn the whole order of the rest, which seemeth, for weighty and remarkable reasons, to be so particularly mentioned by the holy Ghost.

The same Argument also will bind the more strongly by considering the order that is amongst the *vials*, and *trumpets* among themselves: for, if one trumpet, or vial (accordingly as they are designed, 1, 2, &c.) be in time preceeding or succeeding to another, in respect of the matter contained in them, then that same order must be between the seventh seal, and the trumpets comprehended under it; and the seventh trumpet, which hath the seven vials following upon it (for that same reason which distinguisheth the second from the first, and the sixth from the fifth) will hold also in distinguishing the seventh from the sixth preceeding. But it will be clear that the trumpets have order amongst themselves, (as appeareth *Chap. 8.* last *verse*, by the three woes of the last trumpets successive one to another) and so also in the matter of the *vials*, as will appear, *chap. 16.* And therefore we conclude, that the trumpets which are contained under the seventh seal, cannot be contemporary with the six former seals, nor can the vials which fall in under the seventh trumpet, be contemporary with the six first trumpets much less with the seals.

2. It may be made out by the different matter contained in these principal prophecies, that they cannot be contemporary one with another; but must be successive to one another: for, the seals hold forth predominant persecution by Heathens,

the trumpets hold forth the tyranny of Antichrist unto its height, which is inconsistent with the former; the *vials* bring judgement on all the Churches enemies, which is inconsistent with both: which argument will be more clear hereafter.

3. It may be thus made out. If neither of these prophecies begin at one time; nor end at one time; but one of them succeed to another, then they are not contemporary, but successive one to another: but the first is true. *Ergo.* 1. They have not one beginning: the *vials*, *Chap. 16.* the first of them is poured on them that have the mark of the beast; which beast, was not risen during the seals, and was persecuting under the trumpets, as appeareth, *Chap. 11.* therefore the beginning of the *vials* doth not contemporate either with the seals, or trumpets. Again, the trumpets suppose a Church, unto which they give warning, as appeareth by the Lords sealing, and preparing his own (*Chap. 7.*) ere the trumpets blow, *chap. 8.* and therefore the first trumpet cannot contemporate with the first seal, wherein the preaching of the Gospel, for the begetting of a Church, is held forth, as will appear in the expounding of them. 2. It may be made out, that the close of these three prophecies do not contemporate together: for, it is certain that the *vials* bring the last judgement, as they are called (*Chap. 15.*) *the last plagues*, or (which is all one) *the last war*, *Chap. 11.* and therefore they must be conceived to succeed the seals, and trumpets, which contain, in this respect, the first plagues; for first and last cannot contemporate one with another. 3. Neither the six first seals, nor the six first trumpets (for, the seventh contained a different period from the preceeding, as is said) reach in their events unto the end of the world; for the seventh seal (as is said) followeth the sixth, and so the seventh trumpet followeth the former six: and yet, neither the seventh seal, nor the seventh trumpet, can be said to be after the day of judgement, which that would infer.

Yet concerning this, take these advertisements, 1. That when we name an order or series betwixt trumpets, and seals, or amongst themselves, we mean not, as if what is mentioned under one seal, were fully past and ended before another were opened, and so betwixt the seals and trumpets, &c. No, that is not meant; for the *white horse* in the first seal, and the *red horse* in the second, are still riding, as we will see (*Chap. 19.*) in the time that belongeth to the *vials*; but it looketh especially to the rise of these, as the *white horse* goeth before the *red*, and the *red* before the *black*, and the seals before the trumpets, and so forth, although the event, signified by the *white horse*, may continue after the *red* is come; and so in other events. Also it looketh to these events mentioned as in an eminent degree; as for example, when we say the seals hold forth open persecution, and the trumpets error, the meaning is, they hold out these to be at a height more than ordinary, and to be the predominant state or evil of the Church, during that time respectively. 2. We would be advertised, that one of these may well agree, and be applied to another time and occasion by proportion and analogie, but not simply: As for instance, the *white horse* cometh first out under the first seal and ere long the *red horse* followeth. This may hold doctrinally in the general from it, that where ever the Gospel cometh, ere long the devil stirreth up men to persecute it: or wherever Christ sendeth the Gospel, it holdeth forth that his earand is there to conquer; yet, looking on the words as they are prophetically, they hold forth the first spreading of the Gospel, and the conquest and persecutions that followed it: Otherwise, there were no difference betwixt this Book which is propheticall, and any other which is doctrinal; seeing the general dispensations which befall the Church, might be gathered from both alike; neither would it make for Christs scope, which is to shew unto his servants things to come, for arming of them against them.



**Prop. 2.** The first two prophecies hold forth the troubles of the Church; that of the vials, the ruine of her enemies. 1. That the seals (at least, second, third, and fourth) hold forth sad things to the Church, appeareth, 1. From the fifth seal, *Chap. 6.* in which mention is made of many Martyrs killed for the testimony of Jesus, which must be under the former seals. 2. In that they desire revenge on their persecutors for their blood: whereby it appeareth, that till that time they had been born down by persecutors as unrevenged, which could not be, if the former seals contained judgement on the world.

2. That the trumpets hold forth a torn and wasted condition of the Church, and God by them giving the alarm thereof, is evident, 1. By the Prophets prophesying in sackcloth, *Chap. 11.* and the beasts prevailing against the Saints, *Chap. 13.* which contemporateth with the trumpets. And 2. By this, that when the seventh trumpet sounds (*Chap. 11. 17.*) it is said, that God hath taken to Him His great power, and reigned, as if under the former six His power had lyen by, because His Church was under affliction. 3. That the vials bring judgement on the enemies, appeareth 1. From the Song, *Chap. 11.* when the seventh trumpet sounds, and *Chap. 16. 5.* and 6. it is the shedding of their blood who had shed the blood of His Servants; and it is on the beast his followers and throne, in the Chapters following. And though now and then God took order with particular persecutors; yet such a remarkable change as that, will not agree with a standing persecution, or (to speak so) with a state of persecution, such as was under the former two.

**Prop. 3.** Though both the seals and trumpets hold out troubles to the Church; yet do they hold forth different troubles, not only in time, but in nature and from different enemies. The seals hold forth bloody cruelty from Heathens; the Trumpets, deceitful heresies and troubles from false Christians: which may be thus gathered, 1. Concerning the seals, they are bloody to the Church, as appeareth from the fifth seal, where they cry for vengeance against the shedders of their blood. 2. That under the seals the Saints are meely passive, and patient, in hearing out their cause with sufferings towards their enemies, and prayers towards God: But under the trumpets, it is different. 1. God giveth them warning, that they should be active in preparing for that storm. 2. That they are representing as striving, not only in suffering, and prayer, as to outward enemies, but (*Chap. 11.*) by prophesying, which agreeth better to the vindicating of truth against false Brethren, than towards these who are altogether without. 3. The enemies are diversly described; under the trumpets, come the false Prophet and the locusts, in a secret manner carrying on their design. 4. The effects are different; the seals, shed blood, and take away the lives of all Professors: by the trumpets again, the clear waters of life are imbibtered, and Truth corrupted, Stars made to fall from Heaven, and especially the Prophets persecuted, and insulted over, *Chap. 11.* 5. It is clear from Gods preparing His own against the trumpets (*Chap. 7.*) more than against the seals, *Chap. 6.* Of which difference, this is the reason, that Christ will not keep His people from killing swords, but will guard them from soul-murthering errors, as by *Chap. 7.* compared with *Chap. 9.* and 4. is clear. 6. It is most clear; by comparing the explicatory prophecies (*Chap. 12.* and *13.*) which are contemporary to these of the seals and trumpets: from which may be gathered, not onely that the Church hath troubles during that time; but also, that these troubles are to be distinguished either as they proceed from the Dragon, who waiteth to devour the Child, *Chap. 12.* which contemporates with the seals; or, as they proceed from the beast, *Chap. 13.* which hath horns like the Lamb, but indeed speaketh like the Dragon, and succeedeth him in his seat, which contemporateth with the trumpets.

From which we may conclude, 1. That the first period of the Militant Church, to wit, that which belongeth to the seals,

is to be fixed at the close of the great persecution by Heathens, and her meeting with new storms from within; by the devils raising up false Teachers, and corrupt Doctrines, with great Patrons to them, both Civil and Ecclesiastick; which is a trial of another nature, and yet of as great concernment to her. Therefore, least being free of the former, she should now think her self free of all, the Lord soundeth a trumpet, and giveth her the alarm of this storm: which time will fall about the three hundred year of our Lord, or thereby, when at first the Church enjoyed peace by publick Authority under *Constantine*, which peace was immediately marred by the *Arrian* heresy, and others following it, unto which the trumpets gave warning.

This would not be understood as if the Church wanted heresies under the seals, or persecution under the trumpets: No, the contrary is clear; But this we mean, 1. That under the seals, persecution by blood, had its height, and was more constant: under the trumpets again, heresies and corrupt Doctrine, had their height, and were for the time respectively predominant in the Church. 2. We mean, that under the seals, persecution was still growing till the change came, as the last persecution by *Dioclesian* was the greatest; and that under the trumpets, error and declining grew, till Antichrist came to his height; so that though there may be error under the seals, yet error came not to its height then, and was not the predominant evil which troubled the Church as under the trumpets, 3. Although there may be persecution under the trumpets; Yet thus do they differ, 1. In respect of the persecutors; in the one, open enemies to Christ, and in the other, covered enemies to Christ. 2. They differ in respect of the grounds they go upon, and the manner how they prosecute their designs according to their respective principles.

2. Again, we may conclude. The period between the trumpets and the vials, is to be fixed at the Lords beginning to pursue Antichrist, and to make the obscured light of the Gospel to break out, to the diminishing of Antichrists tyranny; which will fall to be about the one thousand five hundred year of our Lord, or somewhat thereafter: for, the first vial, bringeth judgement on his (that is, the beasts) worshippers; which judgement is carried on by one vial after another (*Chap. 16.*) till he himself be cast in the lake. 2. The sixth trumpet endeth before the last woe, when the seventh is to sound: and (*Chap. 10.*) it is certified by him that sweareth, that the time of his reigning in a predominant and uncontrolled way shall be continued no longer than the seventh Angel begin to sound; at which time, the vials begin to be poured forth on him. 3. It is clear by the Song, *Chap. 11.* after the sounding of the seventh trumpet wherein God is praised for avenging of the blood of His Servants, and beginning to reign in Antichrists overthrow before the eyes of the World; which overthrow is carried on by degrees under the seven vials, and God is praised for it at the beginning, it becometh then so certain, though in one instant it be not perfected.

3. We conclude, that the sixth vial endeth at Antichrists casting in the pit, *Chap. 19.* at the end; the seventh, at the utter overthrow of all the enemies of the Church; and the consummation of all things, yet so as God doth several ways, and at several times plague his enemies before this, but their final and full overthrow goeth along with this.

For these prophecies, which we call explicatory prophecies, they are also three: The first, is in *Chap. 12, 13, 14.* describing Antichrists rise, reign, and begun ruine; and the party to whom he succeedeth, to wit, the Dragon, *Chap. 12.* The second, is, *Chap. 17, 18,* and *19.* holding out a particular explication of his ruine, especially by the fifth and sixth vials. The third, is, *Chap. 20, 21,* and *22.* relating unto the happy estate of the Church here and hereafter, especially under the seventh vial, as at *Chap. 20.* will be cleared.

That these three must be for time contemporary unto; and for the matter (though in more obscure types) comprehended under the principal prophecies; or some part of them; (which was the second thing proposed concerning this series to be cleared) may appear, 1. If these principal prophecies be linked so together that the one of them immediately inferreth the other, and yet so, that all of them together do contain a view of the Churches affairs from the beginning unto the end, Then all these explicatory prophecies must contemporate with some of the former, and the matter contained in them must be of that same nature with, and relate unto, the former: But the first is clear from the Propositions formerly laid down. 2. It will be clear by considering the matter of both. The same thing is in the 12. Chap. that we had Chap. 6. And so the 13. Chap. agreeth with the trumpets, even as the Chap. 17, 18, &c. answer unto the vials; with this difference, The principal prophecies shew the events more shortly and darkly; the explicatory, more fully and clearly. The first sheweth the events, what is done; the second sheweth the manner how, and the Instruments by whom, and circumstances relating unto them. 3. That the 12. Chap. contemporateth with the seals; the 13 and 14. with the trumpets; the 17 & 18, &c. with the vials, may thus be made out, 1. The ruine of Antichrist (Chap. 17, 18, &c.) is evidently and undeniably contemporary with the vials, Chap. 16. which begetteth and perfecteth that ruine. 2. The rise of Antichrist and his reign (Chap. 13.) doth immediately go before his ruine, and so preceedeth the vials immediately; and therefore must contemporate with the trumpets; which do also immediately go before the vials. 3. The Dragons pursuing the Church, (Chap. 12.) is immediately antecedent to the beasts rise, Chap. 13. and so must contemporate with the seals, that immediately go before the trumpets; which contemporate with the beasts rise, according to that certain rule, *quæ conveniunt uni tertio, conveniunt inter se*, that is, if the seals belong to the time that goeth immediately before the trumpets, and the persecution of the Dragon (Chap. 12.) belong to that time also, Then they must belong to one and the self same time, and so in the rest. Or thus, to the same purpose, The seals contain the Churches infancy and first trials; and the 12. Chap. undeniably doth the same; Therefore they are contemporary together. The beast (Chap. 13.) succeedeth the Dragon, as the trumpets do the seals, which proveth again that the beast, Chap. 13. and the trumpets are contemporary; so also must the vials which suc-

ceed the trumpets be contemporary with that reviving state of the Church, Chap. 14. which immediately dependeth upon the beasts height, Chap. 13. And this seemeth to be native to the form of the types, the holy Ghost minding to set out things successive one to another by one manner of expression in seven types; and when He stoppeth, or digresseth to set down what is further needful, for preparation unto, consolation against, amplification, or explication of things contained in these, He taketh himself to an other manner of expression; as after the trumpets, Chap. 9. until the 16. and again, when He returneth to the series of the Story to follow on where He left, He taketh up His former way of setting forth events by sevens, as He doth in the 16. Chapter. And no other reason can be given why He interrupteth that manner of expression, and returneth to it again, but to help us to know what part of this prophesie to subjoyn to another, and what part of it to take as an explicatory repetition of something already said. This we judged necessary to premise in the entry, that we may the more clearly proceed according to the mould proposed; From which in general we may *Observe*,

1. How various the case and state of Christs Church is here one earth, sometimes better, sometimes worse, but most ordinarily under the cross, there being two prophecies holding forth their suffering, and but one their victory; God in His wisdom hath so mixed the conditions of His Church here with prosperity and adversity, that the one is ever set over against the other, to the end that man should find out nothing after Him; Eccles. 7. 14.

Obs. 2. That the best condition of Gods Church, and the worst part of the enemies condition, cometh last. The Church hath a foul morning, and a fair evening; the enemies have a fair morning-blink like Sodom, Gen. 19. but ere long, wrath is poured out of vials upon them.

Obs. 3. That our Lord hath wisely ordered, and circumstanced the case of His Church unto the end of the world, whether in their afflicted or prosperous condition, whether from enemies without or within. Our Lord knoweth them all, and hath given us a little touch of them; and though we cannot know all the particulars, yet that He not only knoweth them, but hath ordered, measured, and timed all of them with all their circumstances, and so far revealed the same to us, should be ground enough of comfort, patience and submission to us.

### Concerning Learned Mede his Synchronisms, or, a particular consideration of the same.

Learned Mede in his accurate *Clavis* to this Book, doth lay down several *Synchronisms*, which he divideth in two parts: and because the right contemporating of the several prophecies, doth much conduce to the understanding thereof, we shall (before we proceed) lay down his *Synchronisms* in order as he hath them; and then shew wherein we agree with them, and wherein we differ from them, according to the former series.

His first *Synchronism*, Part. 1. doth contemporate these four (that is, maketh them to belong to one time, having the same beginning and close) to wit, First, *The woman her being in the wilderness*, Chap. 12. Secondly, *The seven headed beast after the healing of its wound*, Chap. 13. Thirdly, *The treading of the outter Court by the Gentiles*. And, fourthly, *The Prophets prophesying in sackcloth*, Chap. 11. All which are for the same space of one thousand two hundred sixty days, Chap. 12. 6. forty two moneths, Chap. 11. 2. three days and an half, Chap. 11. vers. 9, 11. and time, times, and half a time, Chap. 12. 14. This is a truth, and necessarily followeth upon the exposition of these places.

His second *Synchronism*, is, of the two horned beast, or false prophet, with the ten horned beast, or that which is called the *Image of the beast*, Chap. 13. To speak properly, these cannot be said to be contemporary, because that supposeth them to relate to diverse things: we do therefore say, that that two horned beast or false prophet, and the ten horned beast, or *Image of the beast*, do set forth the same object, to wit, the former seven headed beast after the healing of its wound: and so, upon the matter, it is but the same *Synchronism* with the former, all these types tending to set forth and describe the same Antichrist and his Kingdom, although under several considerations, because no one type doth sufficiently describe him. This will be clear afterward from the exposition of the 13, and 17, Chapters.

The third *Synchronism*, is, of the great whore; mystical Babylon, Chap. 17. ver. 1. and the seven headed, and ten horned beast that carrieth her, vers. 3. Of this we give the same judgment as of the former, That these do describe the same Antichristian Church, considered diversly in respect of its head and body, as the exposition of that Chapter will clear; and therefore they



they are to be understood, not as expressing different events that fall together, but as describing the same one thing under different considerations.

The fourth *Synchronism*, is, of the *hundred forty four thousand sealed virgins*, Chap. 7. *verf. 4.* and Chap. 14. *ver. 1, 3, 4.* with that *Babylonish whore and beast* formerly mentioned: this we acknowledge to be truth, and it is made out, Chapter 7. *Lecture 1.*

His fifth, is but a confectary, drawn from the former four: whereby they are all in their events found to be contemporary one with another; which, according to the former qualifications is to be admitted.

The sixth doth contemporate the *measuring of the inner court*, (Chap. 11. 1.) with the Dragons watching of the woman, and fighting with *Michael*, Chap. 12. This we do not agree unto; because, this measuring of the inner Court or Temple, is contemporary with the leaving out of the outer Court, as will appear from the exposition thereof, Chap. 11. But from the former grounds, the leaving out, and treading underfoot the outer Court, doth succeed to the womans bringing forth her childe, Chap. 12. and doth contemporate with the Prophets prophesying in sackcloth, Chap. 11. Therefore this measuring of the inner Court, cannot be contemporary with the Dragons watching of the woman, but must succeed the same. Neither will the grounds given prove, that this measuring of the inner Court doth preceed in time the treading of the outer court, nor the first ground, to wit, that the building of the inner court of the Temple was, in respect of order and situation, before the building of the outer Court: because, first, that is both obscure and uncertain. And, secondly, the scope of that measuring and allusion to the Temple (Chap. 11.) is not to shew any successive different estate of the Church; but to describe her state during the same time, by distributing of her members in two sorts; even as the Temple of old, after it was completely built, was divided into two Courts, the greatest whereof was common to the multitude, and the least and inner Court peculiar to the priests, who were but a few in comparison of the other, as will be clear from the place; and there is no respect had to the order of its building in respect of time or priority, at all. The second ground, is built upon this mistake, that the 11. Chap. doth deduce the whole series of the prophesie from the beginning thereof to the end, as being the first new prophesie of the opened Book, Chap. 10. supposed by him to be another from that, mentioned Chap. 5. This will be clear to be a mistaken ground, Chap. 10. and is contrary to what was formerly hinted in the division laid down.

The seventh *Synchronism*, is of the seven vials, Chap. 16. with the decaying state of the beast and Babylon: which of it self is clear.

In the second part he doth add other seven *Synchronisms*, the first whereof, is of the *seventh seal*, in as far as it respecteth the first six trumpets with the ten horned-beast, and all these other prophesies mentioned to be contemporary with the first four *Synchronisms* in the first part: so that they and the first six trumpets belong to the same time. This, in the general, we acknowledge to be truth; yet in the application we do exceedingly differ, although we do both grant that the first trumpet doth succeed immediately to the sixth seal, and that the sixth trumpet doth close with the expiring of the 1260. dayes of the Churches wilderness condition: yea, although we make no great question concerning the duration of that time, to wit, that it doth signifie so many years, for dayes, or near thereby, yet do we differ in the fixing of the beginning and close thereof: for, he doth not fix the beginning of these dayes untill Popery and the Antichristian Kingdom be at an height, and so closeth them with his fall ruine; at least, with the first six vials. We again, do begin the trumpets and these 1260. dayes

immediately after the publick authorizing of the Christian Religion in the world; and closeth them at Antichrist his height, and the beginning of his ruine: of which we have spoken, Chap. 11. *Leff. 4.* and it must be so, considering the grounds formerly laid: for, if the first trumpet contemporate with the seventh seal, and the seventh seal immediately succeed to the sixth, and the six first seals be contemporary with *Michael* his war with the Dragon, Chap. 12. and if that war did end at *Constantine* his advancement to the throne of the Empire (which the same Author doth expound to be the womans delivery, and the child his taking to heaven, Chap. 12.) it will follow upon these grounds, that the trumpets, and these 1260. dayes, must be begun at that time of Christianity its being publicly authorized in *Constantine* his time: and if it were not so, there will be a great interval between the womans delivery, and her flying; or between the sixth seal, and the seventh seal; which the series of this prophesie will not admit. From which it will follow, that these dayes must expire with Antichrists height and begun fall. Otherways also, there would be no proportion between the number of dayes and years, that is, so many years to be understood, as dayes are mentioned (which he himself doth grant.) And that ruine of the Roman Hierarchie mentioned before the blowing of the seventh trumpet, Chap. 11. is not a total ruine of that dominion, as himself seemeth to acknowledge, pag. (*mibi*) 20. but the turn and beginning thereof as afterward; and Chap. 11. *Leff. 4.* will be clear.

The second *Synchronism* is, of the measuring of the inner court, and *Michael* his fighting with the Dragon for the childe, with the first six seals. For the last part thereof, to wit, that *Michael* his war with the Dragon and the first six seals, do contemporate (if the close thereof be well understood) we acknowledge; but have already shewed, that the measuring of the inner Court can contemporate with none of them.

The third *synchronism*, to wit, of all the vials with the sixth trumpet, cannot be admitted, because it is inconsistent with the series formerly laid down, and would quite confound the distinction that is between the principal and explicatory prophesies. This is a main difference and hath many others following upon it: we shall therefore endeavour (beside what is already said, and what may be subjoyned, Chap. 11. *Leff. 5.* and Chap. 15.) to make out this, that the vials do not contemporate with the sixth trumpet, but do succeed the same, and belong to the seventh trumpet, and contemporate with it, as the seventh trumpet did belong to the seventh seal, or were comprehended under the same. Which we demonstrate thus, 1. If the title, nature, effects, object, and time of the seven vials, and of the seventh trumpet be the same, then must the seven vials and the seventh trumpet be contemporary expressing the same events: for there can be no distinction gathered between them, if they be the same in all the former respects; and there can be no greater identity than to be one in all these: yea, particularly one in respect of the ruine of the Churches enemies, and her freedom: but the former is true. *Ergo, &c.* The title is one, the seventh trumpet is called a *wo*, and a *great wo*; the seven vials, are called plagues of God, as if they were the former *wo*, divided into so many great plagues. Secondly, That their nature is the same, may be read out of their names which do express it. Thirdly, Their object is the same; the seventh trumpet bringeth destruction upon those that destroyed the earth, and particularly those who slew the Prophets and Servants of God, Chap. 11. *ver. 18.* which can be no other but the judgement on the beast, and his Kingdom, who persecuted the Prophets, *ver. 7.* and is threatned for that cause, Chap. 13. *v. 10.* and Chap. 17. the vials again are poured out on the same object, to wit, on the men that worship the beast upon his throne, *great Babylon, &c.* Chap. 16. Fourthly, that they belong to the same time, must also be clear, because the seventh trumpet

is the *last wo*, the seven plagues are the *last plagues*, which doth make them relate to one time. And if they were not wholly contemporaneous, they both could not be called the *last*: for, if not so, then the *last wo*, to wit, the *seventh trumpet*, would be posterior to the first six vials. And we conceive that the first of these vials is comprehended under the title, *last plagues*, as well as the seventh; because it also falleth in within the compass of the *last wo*, to wit, the seventh trumpet. And if these four considerations prove them not to be the same, we know not what will prove it; or, for what end such coincident expressions are chosen by the Spirit of God. Beside, these seven vials must be called the *last plagues*, either because they do contemporate with all the three last woes, which cannot be alleaged, or, with the last two only, which also cannot be pleaded for by him, seeing, at most, they begin at the close of the second wo, as is alleaged; or, It must be because they do contemporate with the seventh only, which is the thing we have said: and so they are said to be the *last plagues*, upon the same account, that the seventh trumpet is called the *last wo*, to wit, because both had woes and plagues, and the same woes and plagues preceeding them, and none succeeding; and therefore as the sixth trumpet must go before the last wo, so must it go before the last plagues, and so none of these vials can contemporate with it, seeing they are called *last* with respect to it and as following upon the same.

To clear and confirm it further, we may consider their periods more particularly, and we will find that they arise and close alike, and therefore that wholly they must be contemporaneous: First, that they expire together, to wit, at the end of the world, is not questioned; and they could not both be called the *last*, if it were not so: This then will prove them in part to contemporate. Secondly, In reference to their rise, we say either the seventh trumpet doth contemporate only with the seventh vial, or with all the seven; or, with some of them, and not with all. But neither the first nor the last can be said: For 1. All the vials contain matter of one kind, as is already cleared. Therefore there is no reason to divide them, as if one part of them, to wit, the first six, did belong to one wo, to wit, the second wo or sixth trumpet, and others of them to another wo, to wit, the seventh trumpet: there is no reason for this division, especially considering that the last wo is of the same nature as the seven vials are; but the second wo, to wit, the sixth trumpet, is not of the same nature with the last, as the exposition thereof will clear: for which cause, they are divided in distinct woes: The vials therefore being of one nature, cannot agree to woes that are so different in all the former respects. Secondly, That there is some observable march and bound betwixt the second and third wo, cannot be denied; for, it is especially marked in all the three last woes, *one wo is past and another cometh, &c.* and the exposition will make it out: But if we will apply some vials to the second wo, and others to the third, there will be no such remarkable change to fix the difference betwixt these two woes; because all the vials are but steps and degrees of plagues of the same kind, or rather of one plague, and that on the same object, to wit, Antichrist, &c. But these three woes do express judgements of different kinds, and upon different objects. And it is observable, that that Learned Author, otherwise most acute in every thing, yet here is at some stand, whether to take in the first five, or the first six vials within the sixth trumpet. And considering, that the seven vials are put together in one form by the holy Ghost, even as the seals and trumpets were, What reason can there be given, why they should be divided, and the last only made to contemporate with the seventh trumpet, and others with the preceeding trumpets, as if it were not one principal prophesie as the rest are, more than to divide the trumpets, and to make the last only to contemporate with the seventh seal, and the rest with the other

preceeding seals, seeing the Spirit keepeth the same form in both? Further, we argue thus, if the seventh vial and the seventh trumpet only contemporate together, Then the first six vials must contemporate with the preceeding trumpet, to wit, the sixth; But that cannot be said: because first, the vials, carry judgements on the same object with the seventh trumpet, to wit, on the beast, but the sixth trumpet doth contain a judgement of another nature, and on another object, as is said: Therefore the vials cannot belong to it. Secondly, The series and strain of the vials, sheweth that they together, do contain one whole period of the state of the Militant Church, to wit, Antichrists declining and decaying estate, even as the seals and trumpets did contain two former periods, to wit, the Churches sufferings, under Heathenish Persecutions, and Antichrist his rise and height. The sixth trumpet therefore, being a step or degree of a former period, cannot be contemporaneous with any of the vials, which are steps of a subsequent period; for, two periods, neither in whole, nor in part can be contemporaneous one with another.

More particularly, their rise must be at one and the same time: for, the seventh trumpet cometh immediately on the back of the killing of the witnesses, and contemporateth with the whole course of their liberty, as appeareth by this, that *then, and not until then, the Kingdoms of the earth becometh the Lords, Then he taketh to him his great power and reigneth, Then he rewardeth his servants the Prophets, and destroyeth them that destroyed the earth, Then the temple is opened in heaven and the ark of his testament is seen, &c.* as it is chap. 11. All which do suppose, that it was otherways in all these respects before the seventh trumpet did sound, seeing these are marked to be effects of the sounding of it: which demonstrateth, that the sounding thereof must be immediately upon the back of Antichrists height, and killing of the witnesses; and so must carry on his ruine, long before his destruction, which cometh by the sixth vial. It must therefore blow long before the seventh vial; yea, it must contemporate with the first, because they (to wit, all the vials) carry on Antichrist's ruine, from that same term, as is granted, and will appear from chap. 15. where the Angels with the vials (even the first of them) came out of the Temple thus opened by the seventh trumpet, upon the instant of the earthquake and shaking of Antichrists Kingdom, at the expiring of the sixth trumpet, which is the very march thereof: for which, see chap. 11. *Left. 4.* Therefore none of these vials can preceed the seventh trumpet, seeing before it, the Temple is supposed to be shut. Secondly, This last wo doth immediately succeed the second wo, and therefore must have its beginning with the first vial, because if six vials did preceed the blowing of the seventh trumpet, Then would a distinct wo intervene between these two, to wit, Antichrists ruine, which is carried on by the first six vials; which were absurd: for, the sixth trumpet is not called a wo as bringing any judgement on Antichrist, as the exposition will clear, and is granted by him. Thirdly, If it were so, that the first six vials did belong to the sixth trumpet, Then would it, to wit, the sixth trumpet, contain two woes, to wit, the plague of Mahomet and the ruine of Antichrist; for, both these give a denomination to several woes; But the former is absurd. Fourthly, If the seventh trumpet doth comprehend Antichrists ruine and the carrying on thereof to his destruction, Then must it contain the first six vials, because by these he is ruined, and brought to nought, and his judgement is begun immediately on the back of his height and fall, and perfected by them, Therefore must it here belong to the seventh trumpet, or, the seventh trumpet doth no way belong to the ruine of Antichrist; but it doth belong to his ruine, as was formerly hinted, in the object thereof, and afterward will be clear. *Ergo, &c.* Fifthly, If the sixth trumpet doth contain Antichrists height, and the Churches lowest sufferings, Then



Then can it not comprehend the first six vials, because by them Antichrist is ruined and brought to nought; and it is absurd to place Antichrist his height, and total fall under the same trumpet, or wo, seeing they do not fall under one period. Neither will it consist with the nature of this prophesie, that one trumpet, which containeth but a part of one period, should contain effects of so contrary and opposite natures, as Antichrists greatest height, and his total and full ruine; But the former is true, the sixth trumpet containeth his height and triumph. *Ergo*, &c. Sixthly, The sixth trumpet doth leave the beast in some being while the seventh come, as the same Author granteth, *Synchronism* 1. of this second part; But the sixth vial doth wholly overturn Antichrist and casteth him in the lake, as will appear from Chapters 16, and 19. and is often inculcated by this Author. Therefore the sixth trumpet and the first six vials can no way be contemporary. Seventhly, This seventh trumpet doth contemporate with the palm-bearing company, *chap. 7.* which palm-bearing company doth immediatly succeed to the sealed company preceeding; so that where the sealed company closeth, there they begin, and the vials doth the same. For, (*chap. 15.*) immediately upon the hundred forty four thousand, their being compleat & getting the victory over Antichrists name (which is all one with having palms in their hands) then immediatly came the Angels forth with the vials, and not till then; Therefore it will follow, that the vials must in whole contemporate with the seventh trumpet, the contemporary of that palm-bearing company, according to the common rule, *que conveniunt unitertio, conveniunt inter se*; But the first is true, as from the former grounds is clear. *Ergo*, &c. Lastly, If we suppose 1260. days to signifie so many years, as he doth; and again, if we suppose that just so many years must intervene between the breaking of that Heathenish persecution, and the blowing of the seventh trumpet, and also of the pouring out of the first vial, Then must the seventh trumpet, and the beginning of the vials, be contemporary; this cannot but hold: But both the former are true, And are to be supposed; the first from his grounds, *chap. 11.* The second will appear thus, that so many years *de facto*, or, in experience, have intervened, from the Churches delivery from Heathenish persecution, and her begun delivery from Antichrist, before which, no vial can be said to be poured forth: the other part, to wit, the blowing of the seventh trumpet upon the expiring of these 1260. dayes from that date, is to be made out, *chap. 11. Lett. 4.* In sum, if it can be made out, that the sixth trumpet is past, and the seventh already hath founded *de facto*, Then the debate of contemporating the seventh trumpet with the last vial only, will vanish; because that is the thing driven at; that the seventh trumpet may hold forth an estate of absolute freedom to the Church after Antichrist his full ruine; But, we suppose that the former is made out, *chap. 11. Lett. 4.* The grounds therefore that are laid to hold up this *Synchronism*, must also fall.

If it be said, that the seventh trumpet doth suppose an absolute freedom from Antichrist, because in it the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, the Kingdoms of the earth are become His, &c. which cannot be verified during the first six vials while in part Antichrist reigneth, Therefore it must succeed them? Answer, first, This is a mistake of the place, which is not to shew what case the Church shall be in at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, but, by way of anticipation, to shew the effects following thereupon before they come: and serveth to explicate the expected events thereof and make it observable, because of such a wonderful change, to wit, that Kingdoms and Nations, even now Antichrists, are, by its sounding, to become the Lords: which doth suppose Antichrist to be strong, having many Kingdoms and Nations, and the Church to be few and low when it doth sound. Secondly, Although it express the events in their heighest degree, yet it will not follow that

it was at its height instantly at the blowing thereof; but only this, that it was to be so ere it expired; Because it is usual in this prophesie to express the state of the Church, during one period by the most eminent step thereof, as we will find, *chap. 11.* and 12. where the Church is said to be in the wilderness during a whole period, because that decay came to a height during that time, although it was not at the first instant so low. Particularly, the whole state of the Church, after Heathenish persecution, is set forth, (*chap. 7.*) in two periods; the one, to wit, that of the sealed number, is set forth at its lowest, the other, at its heighest victory: yet, no question, ere that palm-bearing company came to a height after the sealing time, there was a fight and wrestling against Antichrist for his weakening. Hence we may reason, either the vials, which bring down Antichrist, must belong to be sealed, or to the palm-bearing company; for, there is no mids: But they cannot belong to the first; because in all periods, the last step is the heighest step, as the last persecuting seal is the forest: The last trumpet of Antichrist his reign, hath him heighest, and the last vial hath his Kingdom lowest: the vials therefore which suppose Antichrists height to be past, and the Churches flourishing condition to be begun, can in respect of none of them contemporate with the sealed number, but with the palm-bearing company; and so all of them must contemporate with the seventh trumpet, which was the thing to be demonstrated.

His fourth *Synchronism*, is, of the Serpent and Dragon his binding, *chap. 20.* with the seventh trumpet. This being well understood, according to our former grounds, whereby the seventh trumpet, and all the vials are made contemporary, is to be fixed as a truth: but being understood (as he doth understand it) by contemporating the seventh trumpet with the seventh vial only, and that interval which followeth the destruction of the beast by the sixth vial, is not to be admitted. And supposing that that binding of Satan, (during these thousand years, *chap. 20.*) doth contemporate fully with the seventh trumpet, *chap. 11.* (which is indeed a truth) and supposing that the seventh trumpet doth begin with the seven vials immediately on the fall of Antichrist his declining Kingdom (which we have formerly made out) It will necessarily follow, that the thousand years are to begin with the vials where the sixth trumpet closeth Antichrist height: and as the seventh trumpet doth not presuppose Antichrists fall, but his begun ruine, (as hath been shewn) So it must be said of that thousand years binding of Satan, which is called the time of his binding; because, during that period, he cometh to be bound, although at the entry thereof his restraint be not at its height: concerning which, more is to be seen, *chap. 20. Lett. 4.*

His fifth *Synchronism*, is, of the thousand years of Christs reign with the seventh trumpet or interval following the beasts destruction. This reign of Christs, being the same with Satans restraint; what judgment we have given of the former *Synchronism*, is also to be applied here.

The sixth *Synchronism*, is, of the new Jerusalem, and the Lambs wife, with the seventh trumpet and interval foresaid. This we cannot admit, because we conceive that new Jerusalem is to set forth the glorified estate of the Church-triumphant, and so falleth not in under the seventh trumpet, save as that trumpet doth put an end to time and enter the Church (then made ready as a Bride for the Bridegroom) within the palace of the King, and there to abide for ever. But of the grounds thereof, see more, *chap. 21. Lett. 1.*

The seventh and last *Synchronism*, is, of that palm-bearing innumerable company, *chap. 7. vers. 9.* with the seventh trumpet, or interval aforesaid. This general we acknowledge to be a truth, the seventh trumpet being begun with the first vial, as hath been said: but the restricting of it to the interval, following the destruction of the beast and sixth vial, cannot be admitted: and is the

the rise of that discrepancy which is in the application of many of these *Synchronisms*, which otherways in the general are so-

lided, and do agree fully with the series and mould which we have laid down, as in the procedor will appear.

## LECTURE II.

Verf. 1. **A**ND I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts, saying, Come, and see.

2. And I saw, and behold, a white horse, and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

**F**OLLOWETH now the History of opening the seals, which is to be knit to *vers. 7. of chap. 5. and he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the Throne.* There is then a digression by a Song from the matter, whereunto now he returneth, as it were, thus; I saw when the Lamb had taken the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne, He went on to open the seals, thereafter I saw, and behold, &c.

Every one of these seals hath a type, holding forth the matter contained in it, and some word of explication added for the understanding of it.

The first four have one common type, to wit, a *Horse*, because they relate to one common subject or object, to wit, the Church, and they have a voice, calling, *Come, and see*: The fifth and sixth have no such voice, because they speak so distinctly of themselves with difference from the former four in respect of their scope.

For conceiving the meaning of these seals, take notice, 1. that they are not to be looked upon, as continuing a Story of the Church from the beginning to the end of the World, as was said; yea, it appeareth by the Answer given to the Saints in the fifth seal, that there were Martyres to be crowned by suffering after that time before the end; and it being clear that these Martyres are not crowned by the sixth seal; which bringeth judgement upon persecuters, It must remain therefore to be fulfilled under the trumpets, and consequently that they must intervene between the sixth seal and the end.

2. Take notice, that by them is set forth the state of the Church, and that under persecution uninterrupted, until the sixth seal be opened. For, 1. there is one common sign or type in the first four seals, to wit, an *Horse*, which in the first seal representeth the Church as honourable and victorious by the spreading of the Gospel. And therefore, 2. by an *Horse*, under the second, third, and fourth, must be understood the same thing represented, to wit, the Church, although different in her condition from the former, according as the same type is variously set forth. 3. It appeareth by the fifth seal, that the Churches suffering is here to be understood, Where we have these four, 1. That the party suffering was the Church, as appeareth by their Prayer, *Dost thou not avenge our blood, &c.* 2. It appeareth that their suffering was for no private quarrel, by their description, *vers. 9. The souls of them that were slain, for the word of God, and for the testimonie which they held.* 3. It appeareth that this suffering was from men, and that without the Church, by their description who were instruments, *Dost thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?* As looking to the multitude of the world, contradistinguished from the Church. 4. It appeareth, that this suffering was for a long time uninterrupted, and so must be the first suffering of the Church before God overthrew Heathen Persecuters: their Prayer, *How long, Lord, wilt thou not judge and avenge our blood, &c.* which importeth, that unto this time God had not visibly reckoned with Heathen Persecuters, as He did when Authority be-

gan to own Christianity: and so these first five seals, at least, hold forth the suffering condition of the Church during the time of Heathenish Emperors and this period runneth to the first great change of Gods outward dispensations to His Church, to wit, when civil Authority and force began to befriend the Church against her enemies, which will be found to be in *Constantines* time, about the year 310. or thereby. Yet would we not pre-emptorily assert, that none of these judgements affected the wicked world during that time. For, 1. God sendeth the Gospel into the world. 2. Many profane men reject it: for which 3. God plagueth the ungrate world more than before the Gospel came: Whereupon, 4. the rage and malice of men do break out against the Gospel and the Professors of it, as the causes of all their evil, which procureth again new judgements from God. By which we may see what interwoven connexion there is amongst these things, to wit, the Churches sufferings and the worlds (which hath been long since observed by *Tertullian* and *Cyprian* in their Apologies *contra Scapulam* and *Demetrium*) But this we think, that though there might be (and no question were,) judgements on the world for despising the Gospel, and particular plagues on persecuters; yet during that time, there was no such general reckoning with them, nor are they such judgements which these seals primarily describe, which is all we would say.

For understanding these seals, or types in them, we would have respect to these three, 1. To the key or series of the Story before expressed from the fifth seal. 2. To the nature of the type it self, being compared with other Scriptures. 3. To the events as they are recorded in story.

The first words of this Chapter hold forth the rise of the vision, to wit, the Lambs opening one of the seals; which is to be knit to *vers. 7. Chap. 5.* as is said. By opening one of the seals, is understood the first seal, as *Matth. 28. 1. One of the Sabbath*; or, by *One day of the week*, is understood the first day of the week, as by comparing of the Evangelists is clear, and is here confirmed by designing, the second, the third, &c. after this, and so also it is clear, that by mentioning *one beast*, is understood the first, by the same reasons. We shew before (*chap. 5.*) that these Books were long scrolls, rolled about something, and the Book being so rolled, it might be divided by sundry seals, so that one part might be opened and read, while the rest were sealed, and so, when he had opened the first seal, importeth, that such a part of the scroll was made legible.

The first thing that occurreth, is, the preparation by the first beasts inviting to come and see. This is common to the first four seals, though in some things there be difference. There are three parts in the preparation for this seal; the first is common; a voice, saying, *come and see*: which is not only for *Johns* upstirring and warrant to behold that type; but also for all Readers and Hearers, to put them to observe it, implying that there is some mystery in the thing, yet desirable in it self to be known, and to be desired by Gods People.



The second, is, That it is the *first* beast that uttereth this voice, chap. 4 he is like a Lion, importing the valiant courage and boldness that faithful Ministers had in the Primitive times, when Christ first sent forth the Gospel, and it sulteth well with the type following, the beasts being so marshalled as they hold forth the qualifications that should be, and are requisite to be, in faithful Ministers in the execution of the things prophesied of in these types.

The third is, that it is said to be *like the noise*, or voice of thunder, because of the power and force of that word, exhorting all to the beholding and welcoming of Christ in the Gospel, as was in the first founding of the Christian Church, and spreading of the Gospel and the flourishing state thereof, when He furnished His Apostles, and Ministers with such liberty and boldness.

From all which, these two special Doctrines arise, 1. That the best of men need upstirring for receiving the things of God and considering His Dispensations; were it John himself, he hath need of upstirring; and consequently, all Gods People have need of upstirring on this side of time, else things may escape us and not be observed, means are not useles, a Ministry is needful and useful as long as there is a corrupt member in a Church or corruption in any member.

2. That our Lord Jesus in dispensing gifts to His Church and People here, hath suited and accommodated the qualifications of His Ministers wisely to that which they have to do. Therefore He having the Gospel to spread, He fitteth men like Lyons, as through the *Acts* of the Apostles is clear; and when He calleth men to suffer, He fitteth them like a Calf, as the second beast is set out, with patience to endure persecution. Or, take the Doctrine thus, that the thriving of the Gospel is accompanied with bold and valiant Preachers; Or, boldness and liberty in Preaching, is a good sign that God mindeth the thriving of the Gospel.

*Vers* 2. We come now more near to the types. The first thing seen, is, a *white horse*. Where consider, 1. The type, that is, a horse and a rider, 2. How he is described and set out in several circumstances; as First, from his colour, he is *white*. Secondly, in his rider and his armour, *he that sat on him had a bow*. Thirdly, in his dignity, *a crown was given unto him*. Fourthly, his employment (which is expressed in the word added for explication) *he went forth conquering, and to conquer*.

1. By a horse and a rider, is understood in Scripture amongst the Prophets some dispensation of the Lord to His Church, brought about mediately by the Ministry of Angels or men, or immediately by God Himself, as is clear by comparing *Zechar. 1. vers. 8.* with *vers. 10.* *Vers. 8.* the Prophet seeth a man riding, &c. and behind him were red horses speckled and white. *Vers. 10.* Again, expoundeth this to be these whom the Lord hath sent to walk too and fro through the earth, That is, His dispensations of several kinds, by what ever men He pleaseth to bring them about, and they are either good and prosperous, or adverse and afflicting dispensations, as the colours and other circumstances difference them, as in the forecited place.

His Dispensations are compared to horses and riders on them, for these reasons, 1. To let us see His Sovereignty that hath all these at His command to send for good and ill, as great Kings have their Messengers for executing their will. 2. To shew the speediness, swiftness, and irresistableness of whatsoever dispensation He sendeth, as the horse is speedy and valiant. 3. To shew the dependence of all events on His dominion, and His immediat ordering and guiding of them as a rider doth an horse: and he letteth them not run at random, or by guess, as a horse without a rider or bridle, but hath them all well ordered whether good or bad.

2. A *white horse* signifieth comfort, gladness, victory, triumph, and antiquity, both as Scripture and profane Authors clear it.

See *chap. 19. 11.* where Christ is in His triumph upon a white horse.

3. The riders armour and dignity, a *bow* and a *crown*, which signifieth the same thing: The *bow* shooteth far and pierceeth deeply, as is said, *Psal. 45. Thy arrows are sharp in the hearts of the Kings enemies.* A *crown* again, setteth out stateliness and victory, especially while it is said, *a crown was given him*, which suppoeth growing success.

4. This is cleared by the word added for explication, *He went out conquering*, that is, carrying all before him; and *to conquer*, that is, continuing and going on to do so victoriously. In the application of this, and of the following types, we shall look, 1. to them as Prophetical, relating to particular events and times. 2. As holding forth some Doctrines in general, useful for all times.

By this type, is understood the flourishing estate of the Gospel, and the spreading estate of the Church by it after our Lords Ascension, as it were, Christ in the Ministry of His Word, going out to conquer souls and prevailing. First, This exposition agreeth well with the type, being compared with *Psal. 45. 3, 4, 5.* and *Rev. 19. 11, &c.* In which places, Christ is represented, 1. as riding on horse-back, and that upon a white horse. 2. as armed with arrows, and the two-edged sword, which is His Word. 3. As Crowned. 4. As having the same design of riding prosperously, &c. for the subduing of the people under Him by His sharp arrows in their hearts: which is the very same thing agreeing with this type. Secondly, It agreeth well with the event: If we consider the first estate of the Church, immediately after Christs Ascension, (the describing whereof is the scope of this first type) we will find it in the Apostles dayes to have exceedingly spread, the Gospel then and a little thereafter triumphing, and conquering almost over the whole world. Paul preached from Jerusalem to Illyricum, *Rom. 15. 19.* then among the Jews, the Word increased mightily, *Acts 6. 7.* to Damascus, *Acts 8.* in Arabia, *Gal. 1. Pontus, Asia, Cappadocia, Babel, Bithynia, 1 Pet. 1. 1.* and *chap. 5. 13.* to Parthia, Media, Mesopotamia, &c. *Act. 2. 9.* to Corinth, Athens, Macedonia, Galatia, Rome, Antioch, &c. as appeareth by the History of the *Acts*, and the Epistles written to these Churches: which being looked upon in it self, to be carried on so suddenly by such weak means and despicable instruments, as the preaching, and Preachers of the Gospel: and over so great difficulties, as the wisdom, power, and enmity of the world, It cannot but be wonderful and passing credit, and can be no other thing but the conquest of Him who can subdue all things to Himself, and call things that are not, to bring to nought things that are, by the most feeble and unlikely means; So that justly this event may be described by such a type as this.

If we take from History a view of after-times, it spread to Africk, Spain; yea, to Britain it self, as is testified by the most Ancient Writers, whether by Simon Zelotes, or Joseph of Arimathea, or by some of the Apostles themselves, as is asserted by *Cent. Magd. Cent. 2. Foxe, white in his way, usher de suc. Eccl. Brit.* we shall not determine. This is clear from *Tertullian Apol. adv. Gentes*, that before his days, Britain, which was inaccessible to the Romans Armies, was made subject to Christ by the Gospel. This is enough to prove the event to answer the type, and that this horse hath conquered according as was foretold, the Church at that time being enlarged in bounds, increased in number, shining by the gifts of Ministers and lives of Professors, and being in a great measure, for a time kepted from being overrun with Errors and Schism. This horse and rider, though He began to conquer then, He hath not altogether given over yet, though for a time He may seem to halt: when the world is again restored from antichristian darkness, ye will find Him thus mounted, *chap. 19.*

For general Doctrines ye may observe these, 1. That the preach-

preaching of the Gospel ( more than any other dispensation ) cometh not by guesse amongst a people, but is sent, and ordered as other dispensations are, and hath a particular Commission. It is one of the horses He sendeth here: and hence it is that it is sent to, and preached in one place, and not in another. So, *Acts* 16. the Spirit putteth them to one place, and suffereth them not to go to another place. There is not a Sermon cometh without a Commission. *Obs.* 2. That the thriving and successe of the Gospel ( more than the coming of the Gospel among a people ) goeth not by guesse. The Gospel hath its end as well as its Commission, a particular Commission for such an effect, *Isa.* 55. 10. as the rain cometh down. 2. *Corinth.* 2. 14. *Thanks be to God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ.* 3. The Gospel is most mighty to conquer and subdue when Christ armeth it with a Commission and doth concur therewith, 2 *Corinth.* 10. 4. *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of Christ, and bringing into captivity every thought, &c.* 4. From this discription of the horse and his rider and his employment, *Obs.* That the great and main end of the Gospel, where it cometh, is to conquer and subdue souls. That is the end of a Minister, to bring souls in subjection to Christ, 2. *Cor.* 10. 5. *To pull down strong holds, to cast down imaginations, and every high thing, to lead every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.* And it hath its end, when Christs arrows are made powerful to pierce hearts. Compare, *Eph.* 4. 8. with *Psal.* 68. 18. *He ascended on high, and led captive, and received gifts for men; even for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them.* This is the main thing the Gospel aimeth at: and as many of you as render to Jesus Christ, the Gospel hath had its force and effect in you. But where folks stand out in their rebellion, it hath not its proper fruit: And O, how few are wrought upon kindly! How few are made subject! How many are yet serving their lusts and pleasures, and yeelding themselves to sin which they were born slaves to, sin and Satan keeping still their old dominion in them, and they their old subordination to them! *Obs.* 5. The Gospel conquereth more or lesse where ever it cometh, that being its earand to conquer; when Christ is mounted, He is going to conquer, if it were but to take one fort or one soul from Satan; when He lights His candle, it is for some lost groat, and it will accomplish that for which He sent it, *Isa.* 55. 6. Taking this conquest and flourishing estate of the Gospel to relate to the first times thereof when it came into the world, *Obs.* That most frequently the Gospel at its first coming amongst a people prevaieth most; and hath more sensible successe and conquest, than at any other time. So was it when it came first to the world, its victories were swift and speedy; encreasing more for a few years at that time, than afterwards in many generations. And so it is when the Gospel, after Antichrists defection, reviveth again, *Chap.* 19. 11. In a few years it spread through many Kingdoms and Nations, when there were but few Labourers comparatively. In *Luthers* dayes it conquered more than for a hundred years since. And as this holdeth in the general, when the Gospel cometh to a Land; so doth it proportionably hold with a Congregation, yea with particular persons, who in experience are found often to take more sensible progresse at their beginning than afterward; So also with the coming of a particular Minister with the Gospel to a certain place, often he is most sensibly countenanced, or at least by people more accepted than afterwards, it being often with them as with the hearers of *John Baptist.* *John* 5: 35. who rejoyced in his light for a season.

*Reason.* 1. Because ordinarily some more than a common impression upon the hearts of hearers accompanieth the Gospel at its first entry, there being generally amongst people some common effects of the Spirit, such as convictions, warm-

ing of affections with love to the message, and to the carriers of it, as was in *John's* hearers; partly, from the newnesse and uncouthnesse of the thing; partly, from the lovelinesse and desirableness of what is contained in it; partly, from the reasonableness and equity of what the word calleth to; partly from the exercises and wakenings of others touched about them; partly, from some special efficacy and power usually accompanying the Word at its entry, while the affections of both Speakers and Hearers are most warm: which things, being somewhat new to many, and not being acquainted formerly with the like, breed some stirring and motion amongst people; which though it be but common, yet someway disposeth for the more serious and single use making of the Word, even as miracles, though not saving gifts of themselves, yet thus contributed for making the Gospel to be received at first among the people: and experience teacheth, that when the Gospel ( to speak so ) becometh more habitual to folks, these motions are more rare, and the disposition to profit, lesse.

*Reason.* 2. When the Gospel cometh among a people, it readily findeth them in some grosse temper of ignorance, profanity, or the like, &c. and therefore when or where the general truths of the Gospel are believed, there is a more readie way to convince, and threaten, and a greater facility to take with convictions, and to tremble at threatnings, when the natural conscience can neither say against the truth it self, or the application of it to them. But again, where the Gospel hath been for a time, men are so puffed up with the name of Christianity ( like *Laodicea*, or, are satisfied with formality for removing of challenges for grosser evils, or with presumption in misapplying the promises ) that it is not so easie to alarm them with their hazard.

*Reason.* 3. Gods intention and purpose in sending of the Gospel to a people or place, is to conquer: and His way of conquering, is, to catch ( as it were ) whole draughts by His net at once ( as we may see by the many thousands, *Act.* 2. 3. and 4. that are gained by one preaching ) and therefore as He never sends the Gospel, but where He hath some to gather, ( so to speak ) He keepeth the tide, and sendeth where, and at such time as He hath many together, having, as it were, fitted and trysted them for that end. As we may see from *Mat.* 9. 37, 38. the fields are first ripened, then Labourers are sent to the Harvest. Every time is not Harvest-time, and therefore not a ripening time; but when He hath ripened a Kingdom, Town, or Parish, then, and not till then, ordinarily thrusts He out His Labourers, who speedily cut down the ripened grain: But as the Harvest doth not alwayes continue, so neither doth this ripening; for a Ministers successe, is not alwayes according to His pains, but according to the ripenesse of the Field he labours in; and therefore he may, when the Harvest is past, be at more pains in the gleanings of a reaped Field, than at first to gather whole sheaves.

*Reason.* 4. Because then ordinarily people are in more capacity to profit by the Gospel, at least, in a lesse incapacity, than when without fruit they have lived for a time under it: for, when it edifieth them not, through their corruption they grow more hard and cold, more secure and presumptuous in respect of themselves, more prejudged in reference to the Word and the carriers of it, and can abide freedom lesse patiently than before, as we may see by the Churches of *Galatia*, who at first, received *Paul* as an Angel of God, *Chap.* 4. 14. and so far he prevailed with them as to make them give up themselves in profession to Christ with much seeming zeal, *vers.* 15. yet afterwards, these same *Galatians* being Christians, took worse *Pauls* freedom, *vers.* 16. and were not so easily, even by him, brought over a fault in Christianity to be singly Christians, as they were at first to be Christians. This being ordinary where the Word cometh, and bettereth not folks condition; the longer they live



live under it, the greater will be their incapacity of getting good by it, *Iſa. 55.*

*Reason. 5.* Which followeth upon this Gods giving up a people Judicially, that they who have loved darkneſſe, rather than light, though light came into the world, ſhould be given up (as it is, *Iſa. 6.*) *To ſee and not perceive, to hear and not to underſtand*: which is, to have means and not to profit by them, or, (as it is, *Iſa. 29. 10.*) to be caſt into a deep ſleep, ſo that all viſions become as a ſealed book unto them. This cauſe hath divers ſteps, in ſome leſſe and in ſome more, according as they continue to thwart with the light of God and to imprifon it in unrightcouſneſſe, *Rom. 1. 18.* Hearers had need to advert what uſe they make of this Goſpel: many ſad proofs of this truth are amongſt them: young ones and beginners had need to be watch-

ful if they thrive not at their entry by this Word, before the ſcroof grow over their hearts, it is a 100 to one (as may be ſeen in experience) if ever it do them good. Miniſters at their entry to a place, and the people with whom they enter, had need to be buſſie, every time of the year will not be Harveſt-time to them.

7. From the order that the Lord keepeth when judgements and ſad diſpenſations are coming, you may ſee though there be three ſad, for one comfortable, yet He beginneth with the comfortable offer of His Grace. Hence *Obſerve*, That in Gods order the offer of Grace cometh firſt, He is content to do folks good, if they do not reject it: the white horſe goeth before the red or any other. This is His way to ſinners, Firſt, to offer Peace before War: which is his practice to you, and ſo it is now the time of your viſitation.

## LECTURE III.

*Verſ. 3. And when he opened the ſecond ſeal, I heard the ſecond beaſt ſay, Come, and ſee.*

*4. And there went out another horſe that was red: and power was given to him that ſat thereon, to take peace from the earth, and that they ſhould kill one another: and there was given unto him a great ſword.*

**F**OLLOWETH now the opening of the ſecond ſeal, which hath the ſame type, to wit, an horſe and a rider, as the former, but very diſſimilar in reſpect of the other particulars, as by comparing them is clear.

That this and the two following do hold forth ſad diſpenſations, will be eaſily granted by theſe who conſider the deſcriptions of them. The main thing to clear then, is, 1. Whether theſe hard things do principally point at judgements on the world, for deſpiſing of the offer of Grace made under the former ſeal; or, 2. Perſecution ſtirred and moved by the world againſt the Profeſſors of Chriſt; or, 3. Gods judgements on perſecutors: Theſe three in their cauſes and in the events, are ſo linked together, that one of them is not long without the other, and it is no great inconſiſtence to take in all. The world deſpiſeth Grace, God plagueth it for that; the Heathens blame the Chriſtians for thoſe evils, being ſtirred up by the devil againſt them, as the only troublers of the world and contemnners of their gods, which putteth them to perſecute, and then the Lord letteth looſe all ſorts of judgements on them, as was hinted before.

Yet more eſpecially, conſidering the ſcope (which is to ſhew the condition of the Church) and the arguments which are in the Text, we think, it ſpecially ſetteth out the ſufferings of the Church: For, 1. it is the ſame type in all with the former, to wit, a horſe, differing only in accidentals, as, colour, &c. It is moſt like then that they ſet forth the ſame thing, and belong to the ſame ſubject, to wit, the Church, but as ſhe is diſſerſly affected, according to the diſſerſe deſcription of circumſtances. 2. The fifth ſeal cleareth this; for, they ſuffer here, who cry for vengeance there; But that is the Church, who are ſuppoſed by that crying to have been long under ſuffering before that, which can be no other but the ſufferings holden out by theſe ſeals. 3. It agreeth beſt with that contemporary prophetic, *Chap. 12.* where this bloudineſſe is ſet out by the red Dragons waiting to devour the maſt child new brought forth. 4. The event, and Chriſts prediction, *Mat. 10. 34. 35.* and *Luk. 12. 51, &c.* that He came not to ſend peace but a ſword, and to kindle a fire already almoſt begun, confirm it: and we cannot more warrantably expound theſe ſad things which follow and accompany the Goſpel of any particular event, than of that which agreeth with His plain Word; by which Word alſo we may be helped to underſtand what taking peace from the earth is, to wit, confuſions and troubles that come on the Church

after the manifeſtation of the Goſpel.

The meaning then of this type, as a prophetic, in ſhort, is, to foretel that that Church which ſhould at firſt ſhine by the ſpreading light of the Goſpel, and ſhould be captivated unto Jeſus Chriſt by His triumphing in His Ordinances throughout the world, that Church ſhould be ſuddenly ſet upon by perſecutors, and a bloody and a terrible-like diſpenſation ſhould immediately follow the conqueſt of the Goſpel, ſo that in no part of the world the Profeſſors thereof ſhould have external peace; but being hated of all men, ſhould be betrayed, killed, maſſacred, and cruelly and univerſally put to death, in ſo far that the former diſpenſations to the Church ſhould ſeem quite to be altered in their outward face, and ſhe changed from her former whitenefſe to a bloody colour, in reſpect of her many ſufferings.

The preparation here to this type, is the ſame as under the former, to wit, a voice, ſaying, *Come, and ſee*: whereby, all are again and again ſtirred up by all the Miniſters of Chriſt, whatever be their qualifications, to conſider the opened ſeals. Only it differeth in theſe two, 1. That this is the ſecond beaſt formerly deſcribed, *Chap. 4. 7.* 2. That though he ſpeaketh the ſame thing, yet doth he it in a different manner, as a Calf or Oxe differeth in their ſound from a Lion. The reaſon why the ſecond beaſt ſo qualified as a Calf, is made uſe of to invite to come and ſee the events of this ſeal, is, becauſe, that beaſt, being moſt famous for patient enduring and hard labouring, ſuiteth beſt with ſuch a ſuffering condition of the Church and ſo ſad news as were to be revealed by this type; and alſo, becauſe it repreſenteth beſt the qualifications of a Miniſtrie fit for ſuch a diſpenſation, and ſo alſo ſetteth forth Gods wiſdom moſt, in fitting men for, and tryſting them with, ſuch a ſad condition of His Church. It is therefore to good purpoſe obſerved at the opening of each ſeal, whether it be the firſt, ſecond or third beaſt that calleth; for, they are not ranked by gueſſe, but purpoſly, to point out a ſuitableneſſe and conformity between ſuch an event or condition of the Church, and the perſons made uſe of in reference thereunto, according as they are repreſented by the ſaids beaſts; and as this expoſition agreeth with the ſcope of the prophetic, ſo with the type, and with the word of explication that is added.

1. It agreeth with the type; for it is ſaid, *There went out another horſe that was red; and there was given unto his rider a ſword, &c.* This red horſe, ſignifieth a bloody diſpenſation: for

for which cause, the Dragon, (*Chap. 12.*) in the prophesie contemporary to this, is called *red*: and the beast that was drunk with the blood of the Saints, is described as scarlet-coloured, for that same cause, to wit, their bloody effects upon the Church. The *Sword* also which was given him, importeth persecution, as *Matth. 10. 34. Luke 12. 49. I came not to find peace, but a sword.* Also *Rom. 8. 35. who shall separate us from the love of God? Shall tribulation, or persecution, or sword? &c.* The meaning then of this type, we clearly take to be the same persecution signified by the red Dragon, *Chap. 12.* which persecution immediately followed and waited upon the Church flourishing by the Gospel, which was typified by the woman, clothed with the Sun, &c. even as this doth follow upon the conquest of the white horse. The word of explication also which is added, doth confirm this; it is said, *Power was given him to take peace from the earth.* Wherein we have, 1. his errand to wit, to take peace from the earth, and put all in confusion. 2. The mean or weapon suitable to that end, to wit, a *Sword*, signifying the marring of that peace by persecution. 3. It is marked in both, that, that power, and that great sword was given him, to signifie Gods Sovereignty over persecuters, and his absolute ordering of persecutions, even the most cruel (which is signified by a great Sword) and most confused, which is signified by killing one another. Yet in all, the Commission is particularly given by God: none can move it till he give power; yea, all the weapons are furnished by him; which is a great proof of his Sovereignty, and contributeth much to the comforting of Gods people under such trials.

There is one objection against this exposition necessarily to be removed for clearing this and other passages of this prophesie: that is, (say some) this Commission is exprest to take peace from the earth; but, through this prophesie, the Church is ordinarily understood by *Heaven*, and these that are without, by the *Earth*.

For answer, We say, 1. It is true by the *Earth*, often is understood the unconverted world: yet it is not alwayes so, even in this prophesie, as is clear by these places, *chap. 3. 10.* The men on the earth which are to be tried, are members of the Church; otherwayes it had been no particular privilege to *Philadelphia* to have been exempted from it; so *Chap. 7. 1. Chap. 12. 9. Chap. 13. 14. Chap. 14. 16, &c.* where the exposition of the several places will make this clear. For, as sometimes the Church is distinguished from the World, and in that respect called *Heaven*; so sometimes the Church Militant is distinguished from that which is Triumphant in heaven, and in that respect it is called the *Earth*; and that is especially, when its trials or sufferings are spoken of, which reach only to that part which is on earth.

2. We answer, That by *Earth* is understood the visible Church here Militant; which is so called, 1. Because it seemeth this prophesie relateth to that of Christs, *Matth. 10. 34.* and therefore is exprest almost in the same words. 2. By persecution of the Church, peace may be said to be taken from the earth, because by it all the earth is so put through other, it having so many troubles, divisions, treacheries, and tumults, &c. going alongst with it. 3. Because it pointeth here at the outward and earthly peace which by persecution could only be taken from them, and that it reacheth not to marre their spiritual and eternal peace, according to Christs word, *Joh. 16. last vers. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace.* 4. The Church may be called the *Earth* here, because it is usual to the Prophets, (whose expressions *John* often followeth) to set out the Church and her troubles under that name, because she is the most excellent part of all the World, therefore do they account it sad to all the earth, which is sad to her, & contra, See *Isai. 24. 1, 4, 5, 6, &c.* where yet the Church is understood, as appeareth from *vers. 5.* and there-

fore the former exposition doth agree well with this expression. We take it then for granted, that this exposition agreeth well with the scope, which is to shew the Churches condition immediately after the Gospel came into the world, and her sufferings then that it agreeth well also with the description of the horse in his colour, rider, commission and weapons. We are therefore, 3. to consider how it doth agree unto the event, which in every thing we will find answerable. None that know any thing, but know how soon persecution, (especially killing with the sword) followed after the Gospel. The Scripture mentioneth it of *Stephen, Act. 7. of James, Act. 12.* The history of the *Acts*, *Pauls* frequent reckoning of persecutions, (and particularly by the sword) *Rom. 8. 35. &c. 1 Cor. 1. 4. 2 Cor. 4. and Chap. 12. 2 Tim. 3. 10, &c.* and the former Epistles to the Churches of *Asia*, make it evident. This also is in general made out by the ten several persecutions (which are for their cruelty, and universality, famous (if we may speak so) in all Church-history) beside what particular murders were committed in several places at all times; so that the event answereth well both to the type and to the exposition of it.

More particularly, we think this part of the prophesie looketh especially unto the first two persecutions, to wit, the first raised by *Nero*, which began near or about the year 66. of our Lord. The second followed (with some interval) under *Domitian*, whose persecution began, *Anno 97.* These were the first, whoby publick Edicts stirred up the heathens and all the enemies of the Christians against them, to kill, murder, and torture at their pleasure. By these persecutions suffered almost all the Apostles, as the history of the Church cleareth, and many other famous Champions of Christ; and it came to that height, that Christians were accounted all the day long as sheep for the slaughter, *Rom. 8. 36.* and could have no certain dwelling-place in the world, though it was not worthy of them. We apply it especially to these two first persecutions: because, 1. It agreeth best with the order of time formerly laid down, to wit, that the second seal is next immediately unto the first. 2. Because the nature of these persecutions, and the effects of them which were in a bloody, cruel and open manner driven on by these two beasts (one of whom, *Paul* calleth the *Lion*, *2 Tim. 4. 17.*) do sure best with the type formerly expounded, though proportionally the following persecutions in their nature are described here, as they were bloody: in which respect, we will find killing with the sword again to be mentioned, *ver. 8.* under the fourth seal.

This being the exposition of this type, as it is propheticall, we shall now lay down some general Doctrines which may be drawn from what is said and further confirm it. 1. From renewing this exhortation, *Come, and see. Observe,* That every passage revealed by God, for the good of his Church, should be taken notice of by them. 2. That it is the second beast which is now made use of when the Church is suffering. *Obs.* That our Lord Jesus hath Ministers fitted for suffering, as well as for action; he hath them who are like Lions to spread the Gospel; and therefore the first Preachers or Reformers in a Land are eminently furnished ordinarily with boldness and zeal, daringly to undertake such a difficult task. Again, he hath them who are patient like calves, when he calleth for suffering. *Observe,* 3. That fitness for patient suffering, is a gift necessary and profitable for the edification of the Church, and a qualification becoming a Minister of the Gospel, no less than the former boldness, and hath work and use in the Church as well as the former hath; though it be not alway so shining, yet is it not to be despised by any. *Obs.* 4. That our Lord Jesus Christ climeth and tryteth Ministers qualifications according to the task which he hath to do with them, whether it be for doing or suffering, he hath them accordingly qualified. 1. He sendeth out as it were Lions, because then he is to triumph over difficulties; then



then come, as it were, calves after them, because their great work, is not so much to gain new ground, as to maintain what the former have gained, and (as it were, calves) to endure suffering; yet both sorts are employed for one end, to preach one Gospel, for the edification of the Church. 5. More particularly from that which is holden forth in the type, being compared with the former seal, we may *Observe*, That a flourishing Gospel in the World or in a Land, is not long without a persecuting sword on the back of it; or ordinarily there is a connexion betwixt a conquering Gospel, and sad trials upon the Professors thereof, *Luk. 12. 49, 50, 51. I came to send fire on the earth, and what will it, if it be already kindled? &c.* Scripture and experience do abundantly confirm this.

We may only ask, How it cometh that persecution followeth so at the heels of the Gospel, and what sort of connexion this may be? *Ans.* We will find a threefold connexion between these.

The first is, meritorious, procured by the Churches walking unworthy of the Gospel; for many despise and reject it; others walk unworthy of it; the most part sit down under a formal and lukewarm profession: and so, by not welcoming kindly the white horse, they do procure this red horse to be sent out upon them for punishing their hypocrisie. This is given for a cause of these first persecutions by some of the blessed Martyrs, particularly by *Cyprian*, who laying out the causes of the persecution, doth name worldliness, emulations, divisions, &c. as sins amongst Christians justly provoking God so to exercise them, accounting that a chastisement as from God, which was persecution as from men. See *Cyprian* in his fourth Epist. of his fourth Book, (which is the 8. Epist. pag. 15. *Edit. Pamellii*, and frequently, see *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 1.*

The second connexion is final, in respect of Gods purpose, who by these persecutions intendeth the bringing about of good ends, as to make his truth more manifest, to discover the rottenness of some professors, to evidence the honesty of others. Many will rejoice for a time under the profession of the Gospel, who, when persecution cometh (like the seed sown in stony ground, *Mat. 13.*) by and by will stumble; therefore the Lord in his wisdom letteth a sword pierce through many of his most precious Servants, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed; which reason is given, *Luk. 2. 34, 35.*

The third connexion may be called occasional, that is, when the light of the Gospel with power cometh into the world, (where sin hath had the dominion, and by it mens corruptions begin to be restrained, and their liberty in sinning marred) corruption and malice in men take occasion thereby to rage, as being the more provoked: and therefore leaveth no mean unforsaken to have that Gospel out of the world, which disturbeth their sinful peace.

This doth not properly flow from the Gospel, but from the devils malice, and mens corruptions which are imbittered thereby, and now rageth to be disturbed in that dominion and possession; which for a long time he hath possessed like a strong man keeping all in peace within his bounds, till this stronger come to cast him out. This maketh many, who lived quietly before light came amongst them, to appear quite another thing.

More particularly, we will find these primitive persecutions to have been raised upon these occasions, which went along with the Gospel.

1. The Gospel drew men from the old Heathenish way of serving idols, and by force of reason did evidence the nothingness of Idolatry, and vanity of that worship which was used by these Emperours, and almost all the world. Upon this Satan took occasion to charge Christians with singularity, in taking up a Religion of their own; and with pride, in counting themselves wiser than their Predecessors; and to be insufferable, as untractable men who would not follow the rest of the

world, nay not their own Emperours, nor Predecessors in the matter of their Religion, but took them to a new way of their own: all which was exceedingly heightened by the devil, to make Christians and Christianity odious. This pretext is frequent,

2. A second was, the devil striving to make Christianity suspected unto the great men of the world, as inconsistent with civil Authority, and tending to the eclipsing and diminishing of temporal greatness, dominion, and power of Kings: which was confirmed by these things. 1. Ministers freedom in reproving the faults of all, and their not sparing nor flattering of any, often occasioned the enmity of great men, who thought that derogatory to their honour, and unbecoming inferiours: Therefore to suppress that, often the most faithful men were persecuted, as we see in that instance of *Herod*, in *John* the Baptist, *Matth. 14.* 2. This suspicion was confirmed by the multiplying of Christians, and the mistake of the nature of Christs Kingdom, as if his Kingdom had been inconsistent with theirs: therefore, fearing lest the multiplying of Christians should have tended to the setting up of Christs power, and the overturning of theirs, they endeavoured to bear them down. This made *Domitian* in a special manner to search for, and put to death, all the natural kindred of our Lord Jesus, lest any of them in the abounding of Christians, should have pleaded title to his Kingdom. 3. The many slanders that were vented against Christians, especially by *Magicians*, *Idolatrous Priests*, *Jews*, *Apostate Christians*, and such like, who crying out on them as enemies to mankind, and guilty of the vilest sins, as of Adultery, Incest, Drunkenness, &c. at their meetings, and so to be the causes of all the plagues that came upon the world: which calumnies, are fully refuted by *Justin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, and *Cyprian* in their Apologies. Wherein these two things are asserted, 1. That Christians were innocent of these scandals. 2. That it was not the Gospel, but the worlds rejecting of the Gospel, that brought these judgements on: 3. This occasion rose from Christians strictness, who would not flatter their Emperours by worshipping of them, and calling them gods, as others did, 4. Nothing more was mistaken than Church-men in their exercising of Discipline and censuring of others without dependance on civil Power, especially when they exceeded in any particular, as that law of *Evaristus*, ordaining that no accusation of a Lay-man, or laick, against a Pastor, should be admitted. This is recorded to have provoked *Trajan* to persecute all the Christians.

3. The failings and practices of some Christians, and their unwarrantable carriage, made Christians odious in the world; especially these, 1. The many differences and divisions that were amongst themselves, and the many sects contrary to truth, and one to another, that sprung up with the Gospel, and the great bitterness wherewith these differences were followed. 2. Outbreakings of Professors in any gross sin, made all others to be so accounted; yea, practices of the *Saturnians*, *Nicolaitans*, and other gross Hereticks, though disclaimed by true Christians, yet were imputed to them. 3. Unfaithfulness in some few of them, in reference to their trust, provoked persecution against all. It is particularly recorded that *Philip* (who was the first Christian Emperour) his killing of the Emperour *Gordianus* (by which deed he came to the Empire) did not only stir up *Decius* afterward to kill him, but also to raise a most hard persecution against all Christians, as become odious by that fact.

*Obs. 6.* The persecutions of the Church of God are particularly ordered as well as the preaching of the Gospel, and the thriving and flourishing of the Church. This horse hath a rider, that hath his armour and a sword given to him, and it is told what he shall do, he shall take peace from the earth, go so far and no further; yea there is a more particular commissionation

missionating of this nor the former, to point out that there is a particular hand guiding the sufferings of the Church and People of God. See it in *Job*, how in all the commissions Satan getteth, he is straitly bounded and limited. If the world rage at Christ and His followers, and persecute, yet that horse is not without a rider, and a bridle, and the sword he carrieth is limited, it cannot hurt a hair of the head of any but as it is commissioned, *Mat. 10. The hairs of your head are all numbered.* Persecution cometh not without a particular Commission, more than one is converted without the influence of His Spirit; He that guideth the one, guideth the other; and our Lord Jesus reigneth now, as before. 7. The restraint mentioned here, to take peace from the *Earth*, sheweth, that no persecution can mar spiritual and eternal peace, they reach but the outward

condition, as, to hurt the name, to plunder the goods, and to kill the body; but can reach no further. *Joh. 14. 27.* Christ's peace is given, not as the world giveth it, uncertainly, but surely: which should make us esteem the more of it. 8. An earthly condition, or peace, is never settled; any trouble may quickly disturb that. 9. The world is much in Gods reverence for their outward peace: at one word He can take peace from the earth, and turn order into confusion, and imbitter the spirits of most familiar friends and near relations one against another. Did not He prevent it, our life would be soon miserable. It is He that we should depend on and acknowledge, even in outward things: for, when He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when He hideth Himself, who can behold Him? *Joh 34. 29.*

## LECTURE IIII.

*Verf. 5. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come, and see. And I beheld, and lo, a black horse, and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.*

*6. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a peny, and three measures of barley for a peny, and see thou hurt not the oyl and the wine.*

**T**Hese Verses continue the history of the opening of the seals, or rather the prophesie revealed by them. The third seal holdeth forth a sad condition of the Church, in some things agreeing with the former type, and preparation thereunto; but, in many circumstances, differing. As first, the voice that calleth, *Come, and see*, is the voice of the third beast, which (*Chap. 4. and 7.*) had the face of a man: whereby is signified, 1. Prudence and reason in the Ministers of the Gospel, as we said there. 2. It signifieth such a condition of the Church to be typified by this type, as should have need of prudence, reason, and wisdom in the Ministers of the Gospel, even as the former two called respectively for boldness and patience as meet for them. 3. It holdeth forth that the Church under this dispensation should be well furnished with Ministers accordingly qualified, as suitable to such a dispensation.

2. The colour of this horse differeth from the former: this is *black*, the former was *red*. 3. The weapons of the rider differ. As also, 4. The word added for explanation, differeth, as we will see more particularly in the opening of them.

That this type may be understood, it will be necessary to insist a little both in the explication and application of it. At the first view, it seemeth to hold forth some terrible famine by all the circumstances of it. More particularly, this horse is said to be *black*: which, in general, holdeth forth a sad strait. *Job* (*Chap. 30. 30.*) giveth it as one of the symptomes of his lamentable condition. And so *Zech. 6. 2.* the *black horses* do represent a sad dispensation coming. Most ordinarily it setteth forth the plague of famine, which turneth the most beautiful colour to blackness, as from *Lam. 4. 8.* and *5. 10.* is clear. 2. The pair of balances in the hand of the rider, import a strait, wherein men should not have meat at their pleasure, but weighed and measured out to them: which ordinarily is used to set forth famine, *Ezek. 4. 16. Lev. 26. 26.* famine is threatned under these words, *ye shall eat your bread by weight, &c.*

In sum, This type importeth these three, 1. A great scarcity and restraint. 2. Not an utter want. 3. A sort of justice or equity in the manning of this want, or accompanying this strait, wherein it differeth from the great confusion and violence without any shew of justice, as was under the former.

3. The word of explication added, *verf. 6.* hath two things to be considered in it, 1. Whence this voice came: it is said to be from the *midst of the four beasts*, that is, from God, or from the Lamb, as He is placed, *Chap. 5. 6.* to shew Christs particular ordering of this most sad dispensation in the object and extent of it: and therefore He is to be considered, not as the rider, but as He who giveth orders unto him. 2. The words uttered, are to be considered: in which there are, 1. A proclamation, and 2. A limitation. The proclamation, is, *A measure of wheat for a peny, and three measures of barley for a peny*: wheat and barley are the two grains most commonly made use of for the entertaining of life. The word, rendred *measure*, is in the Original *χους*. What the particular quantity of it is, needeth not to be enquired: this is commonly acknowledged, that it was the ordinary measure allowed to a working man for his meat in the day, so as it came to be understood ordinarily for a days meat, according to the proverb, *Non sedendum est super Chanicem*, meaning, that none who had but a days meat beside them, ought carelessly to sit down, but had need to provide more.

The price of this measure, is a peny, which is likewise the ordinary wages of a work-man for his service in the day, as appeareth from the parable, *Matth. 20.* The sum cometh to this, that men by their labour and toil should hardly buy so much wheat, which was the best grain, or so much barley, (which was more coarse, and so taking a greater measure) as was meet to entertain them. The limitation added, is, *See that thou hurt not the oyl and the wine.* Wine and oyl are more for chearing and refreshing men, *Psal. 104. 15.* The scope, is, to shew (according to the letter) that though there was much hardship to befall the Church in things that necessarily pertain to their life; yet all should not be destroyed, but a reservation should be of the best things, useful for their refreshment.

This type then holdeth forth a hard condition the Church should be under, and a sad dispensation she should meet with, which, though moderated in a more orderly way than the former, yet should exceedingly mar the beauty of the Church, and bring her low, so that she who before was white and lively, and afterward red and wounded, should now, (as it were) drawing near expiring, fainting and swooning, as one who hath shed much blood, turn black and pale, which,



In general, holdeth forth a growing strait of the Church, drawing nearer unto death than the former.

That we may consider the meaning of this type more particularly, we would lay down these conclusions touching it, 1. We conceive it doth not hold forth an abounding or reigning of justice in the world simply; for, that is of it self no plague, but a great good, and so doth not agree with the scope, which is to set forth the trials of the Church, though we think it may point at a sort of seeming justice in the way, and persons of these who should be instrumental in these afflictions; in which respect, this rider differeth from the former, as is said. 2. Neither can it only literally to be understood of bodily famine, but figuratively; for, the plague of famine, is no peculiar exercise of the Church, but is common to the rest of the world. Again, this famine here, is such a cross as maketh them in the fifth seal to cry for vengeance on these who were instruments of it; which cannot agree to famine properly, which ordinarily floweth from Gods immediat hand. Beside that, there is little in story to evidence the fulfilling of it in that sense, save what is mentioned by *Tertullian* and *Cyprian* to have been in *Africk*. Neither is it likely that any famine hath been or could be, (in the ordinary way that famines come) and wine and oyl be spared, which yet necessarily according to the letter must be. Add, that there is alway some suitableness between the qualifications of the beast inviting to come and see, and the event foretold by the type; but there can be none between the third beast, and the famine literally understood; which yet may well consist, if figuratively it be considered. *Conclusion* 3. The event here foretold, must fall within the first period laid down, to wit, after the first persecution, and before the vengeance executed upon Heathen persecutors; yea, it must be (as it were) a middle sort of persecution between the rise thereof under the second seal, and its height under the sea's following.

By this type then in sum, we understand the Churches sad condition after the first two persecutions; yet, not so much any particular sort of trial on her, whether from without only in respect of persecution, or within only in respect of divisions, errors and heresies in her self, but a concurrence of both, and what accompanieth both, in a manner suitable to this type, whereby the beauty of the Church formerly glorious is now marred and more obscured and darkened, than it was by the preceeding violence and rage of the former persecutors. This exposition and application we will find to suit well with the type in its colour, sign, word of explication, qualification of the beast that inviteth to come and see, and with the event drawn from Story.

1. It is ordinary in the Scripture, particularly in *Exod. 24.* to set down sad judgments of any sort under these four plagues, *Sword, Famine, Pestilence, and Beasts*: and therefore we would not particularly ascribe this type to one sort of plagues, but generally comprehend all these sad calamities which came upon the Church, even as by *Sword*, under the former seal, is not only understood one plague, but all persecution by whatsoever mean the Church was brought low and made bloody: And considering, that the following type cannot be literally understood (wherein also this plague of famine is included;) considering also that the effect (to wit, the Churches sad condition) is rather in the event holden forth to be black, than any particular mean to be pitched upon, whereby that is brought about. We do encline to take it more largely, as comprehending the Churches sad condition in general, and all the means that are instrumental in bringing that about.

2. *Famine* also is figuratively spoken of in Scripture, as it holdeth forth a famine, not of Bread, but of the Word, *Amos 8.11.* and this famine more peculiarly and properly agreeth to the Church.

3. *Famine* is sometimes mentioned as a particular affliction of the Saints, even as *Sword* and *Prison* are. So in *Rom. 8.35.*

2 *Corinth. 11.27.* that is a famine and strait even of outward things occasioned by the worlds imprisoning, banishing, forfeiting, and spoiling of Gods People of their goods, as *Heb. 10.34.* and *11.27, 38.* This famine agreeth to the Church in her persecuted state; as the *Sword* was, so was this made use of by persecutors against her.

Now if it be asked, whether this famine, expressed by the type, be to be taken literally or figuratively, as it more generally comprehendeth all the troubles of the Church, both in reference to her outward and inward condition, according to the three accipions mentioned? We Answer, figuratively: on these considerations, 1. The famine here mentioned, is some sad condition, peculiar to the Church. 2. Because it holdeth forth such a trouble as men are instrumental in, and therefore are liable to Gods vengeance for it, as is clear by the fifth seal following. 3. More particularly, the considering every thing in the type will make this out.

1. It agreeth well with the type: for, *blackness* on the Church, is spoken of in Scripture both as an effect of outward persecution from others, and inward carelessness and division; from which two grounds, the Church (*Cant. 1.5, 6.*) doth derive her blackness. Upon the one side, her mothers children were angry with her, and on the other, she had not kepted the vineyard that was committed to her; which two had brought on blackness, as Sun-burning doth in these hot countries.

2. This will agree with the sign of a pair of balances: whereby open persecution is set forth to be done by seeming authority by sentences, proscriptions and the like; men, as it were, weighing the violence of their hands, *Psal. 58.2.* as if violence could be covered with pretext of Justice. This also agreeth well to error, abusing the Word (which is the balance of the Sanctuary) for the covering of it.

3. It agreeth well to the voice of the third beast, whose qualification of prudence, learning, &c. will be tried and put to exercise by this sort of famine.

4. It speaketh such a famine as hath a reservation; so that though the beauty of the Church may be marred by it, and many things corrupted, Yet the main fundamental and soul-refreshing truths, which are the marrow of the Gospel (called the finest of the wheat, honey, wine and oyl, *Psal. 81.16. Ilia. 25.*) are in despite of all oppositions kept free for the refreshing of Gods People, by which it differeth from the overflowing of heresies under the trumpets, where some persons are exempted, but no truth kept free from these winds, *Chap. 7.* but every green thing made to wither.

More particularly yet to make it out, we look upon it as applicable to the state of the Church during the second Century, after *Domitians* death, which put a close to the second persecution, to wit, under *Trajan, Hadrian, Antonius pius, Antonius Philos. Commodus, Pertinax, Maximinus* and *Severus*, which taketh in five several persecutions. The reasons why we apply it to this time, are,

1. It suiteth well with the series formerly laid down: if the former seal hold forth the first two persecutions, under the first Century, as is said, Then this following seal must hold forth the state of the Church immediately succeeding the former.

2. Because during this time, though the Churches troubles continued; yet began they, after *Domitian's* death, to be of another nature, and to be followed in a different manner from the former, and to look liker this type, as we will see by considering the state of the Church during that time. 1. After *Domitian's* bloody rage, the Church had but a little times breathing for a year, then followed a third persecution under *Trajan*, which continued under *Hadrian* and the first *Antoninus*: all which time is accounted but one persecution by some, because not interrupted. Some interval again there was under *Commodus*, though a more gross man than any of the former: Then persecution

cution again brake out under *Antoninus Philos. Maximinus*, and others; so that the Churches condition is alwayes suffering, even under these Emperours who did not actively persecute: yet because they restrained it not, men took occasion to vent their malice against Christians. 2. These persecutions were most especially followed against Ministers, thereby increasing the famine of the Word, *Clement* was almost the first Martyr under *Trajan*; during that time also suffered *Ignatius, Onesimus, Polycarpus*, and many faithful Ministers; and that persecution of *Maximinus* was especially directed against Ministers, as being in his esteem, the shortest and readiest way to root out Christianity from the world.

By publick Edicts, all meetings of Christians, for Worship or hearing the Word, were discharged: so *Trajan* began, not forbidding Christianity, but condemning all meetings of Christians as contrary to the Law; by which it came to pass, that Pastors were banished, publick Assemblies deserted, and people left without the publick means, *Baronius Volum. 2. pag. 5.*

4. Consider in these persecutions the many banishments and great spoilings of goods, used during that time. It is marked in History, that then they endeavoured the undoing of Christians by banishments, not only to have them at a distance, but, that by sore travel, and spoiling of all they had, they might be weakened and debilitated. At one time *Trajan* having tried who would own Christianity in his Army, and finding ten thousand Christian Souldiers adhering to the faith of Christ, he banished them all, with many Ministers into barren Islands: beside some were purposely martyred by starving, as is recorded of one *Hyacinthus*, one of *Trajan's* own chamber; plundering and confiscation of goods was rife, particularly under *Severus*, whereby, no question, much poverty and great straits followed on the Church, *Baron. Vol. 2. pag. 27. 44, &c.* and other Writers make it clear.

5. Consider, besides all these outward trials, the Church was distracted and overwhelmed with errors, heresies, and corruptions that crept in, such as the *Marcionists, Basilides, Carpocratii, Valentiniens, Priscillianists, Montanists, Cataphrygians, Apolinarists*, with thousands more, venting most gross and vile errors and foolries, whereby both the purity of Doctrine was obscured; and even in all, a great declining from the Primitive simplicity, under the pretext of reverence to Martyres, and following of traditions, &c. All which is specially marked to have begun about that time of *Trajan's* beginning to reign, *Euseb. lib. 3. cap. 26. & lib. 4. cap. 11.* more largely observed, *Cent. Magd.* In their preface to the second *Centurie*.

6. Consider that there were even failings in, and differences among good men and great Lights in the Church, so that what time she was free from outward persecution, it was spent in intestine divisions and debates, as is regated by *Euseb. lib. 8. cap. 1.* *Papias* brought in *Chiliasm*, wherewith *Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, Lactantius*, and many others were infected. *Tertullian*, after great appearing for Christ, became a *Montanist*, and many great men began to cry up Free-will.

7. In Worship, much of their former simplicity was lost; the multiplying of holy dayes, inordinate reverencing of Martyrs (at first honestly intended) were brought in, and many other things observed by the *Cent. Magd. Cent. 2.*

8. Upon these followed Schisms in the Church, when men drave their own devices, and did not acquiesce in the simplicity of the Gospel, in Gods righteous judgement they broke on these: particularly then broke up the long lasting Schism betwixt the East Church and West, concerning the keeping of *Easter*; the Church in the West (for the most part) driving to have it kept on the Sabbath following its ordinary day, moved thereunto (as they alleaged) by tradition, and that difference might be

put betwixt Jews and Christians in the observation of that day. The Churches of the East again, pressing it to be kept on its ordinary day, alleaged *John's* example and the common rule. And though *Irenaeus*, and *Polycarp* (who was *John's* Disciple) took much pains to prevent and remove these divisions, and for a time kept these Churches in communion together, notwithstanding of that difference; yet afterward, it broke out by undiscreeit censuring and condemning of one another to the contempt of all Church-Authority, and rendering of the Church contemptible before others: which, though rising from such a small ground, yet grew to that height, that these two Churches were never heartily united afterward. Which considerations certainly shew the growth of famine in the Church, and the fainting of her spiritual life being joyned to persecution, while (as it is, *Amos 8.9.*) her sun was going down at noon, and the famine of the Word coming to that height (which followed on the former) that the virgins were made to faint for thirst, *vers. 13.* All which agree well with the Type.

9. Add to these, the many reproaches, and slanderous calumnies, that upon these occasions were cast upon the Church, both by Hereticks and Heathens who charged all the evils, which any bearing the name of Christianity committed, upon the Church, as witness *Celsus* his bitter writings answered by *Origen* the Vindication of Christians by *Justin Martyr, Tertullian* and others in their Apologies, who reject these slanders as belonging to the *Gnosticks, Saturninians*, and others of that stamp.

10. If we consider several circumstances of the Churches outward persecution, we will find it not unfitly resembled by this type, as especially in the actors and way followed by them. The actors were not *Commodus* and *Heliogabulus*, profane wretches, (the Church had peace under them) but men for civil Justice and excellency of parts, such as the world never had better, as, *Trajanus*, whose stile was, *Princeps optimus*, so that the salutation to the new Emperours after him became this, I wish you may be *felicior Augusto & melior Trajano.* *Hadrianus* had this encomium, *Restaurator orbis.* The two *Antonini*, the first was stiled *Pius*, the other *Philosophus.* *Severus*, was a most severely just man. Again, their way of persecuting, was not tumultuary, by raging violence joyned with outward dissoluteness and tyranny in their other carriages (as was in *Nero* and *Domitian*) but (by making good Laws for the Commonwealth, and enacting Laws against Christians) they pursued them in a legal way as an act of justice, under pretext of Christians opposition to the worship of the gods, or as a being guilty of the many slanders imputed to them: in which respect, it may be said, that these actors (in comparison of the former) weighed the iniquity of their hands in a ballance, *Psal. 38.*

11. All these persecutions, though being at their height very terrible, yet were they almost all, one way or other restrained: which agreeth well with the limitation of the commission in the type. That persecution raised by *Trajan*, was staid by *Plinius Secundus*, proconsul in *Bithynia*, who thus wrote to *Trajan*, that he supposed it unmeet to kill such multitudes of innocent men, whose Law (as he calleth it) leadeth them to such strictness, as to abstain from these things wherewith they were slandered; but that they used to meet, and sing *Psalms*, &c. as may be at further length seen in the Epistles themselves, *apud Euseb. & Cent. Magd.* To which, *Trajan* returned answer, that Christians should not be sought for to be punished; yet, if they were presented, and accused, that sentence should pass upon them, *Euseb. ibid.* This answer is justly taxed by *Tertullian* in his Apologie, as inconsistent with it self, that Christians as innocent, should not be sought for, and yet if presented as guilty, should be punished: for, (saith he) if guilty, why should they not be sought for? if innocent, why should they be punished? Yet did this occasion much calmness



to Christians, especially in these parts. The persecution stirred by *Hadrian*, was staid by the Apologies which *Quadratus* and *Aristides* presented to him. *Anton. Pius* was made to relent by that Apologie of *Justin Martyr*, *Anton. Philoſophus*, by an extraordinary providence, was changed, and made to befriend Christians, which was thus; in the *Marcomanick Wars*, he and his Army were brought to great straits, being overpowered with the enemy, and inclosed among mountains without water, so that he and they were like to perish for thirst, a Legion of Christian Souldiers (who then were in the Armie) did separate themselves from the rest, and before them all, falling down to prayer, they obtained from the Lord not only water in abundance, but a glorious victory over the enemies; the Lord causing it to rain with such fire and thunder upon the enemy, as made them to give backs. This Legion upon this occasion, was by him called *Legio fulminatrix*: and this miracle prevailed so with the Emperour, that presently he gave out an edict most favourable to Christians, ordaining that they should neither be sought for, nor punished, if presented: but that their accusers should be punished, seeing that his safety and the safety of the Empire depended upon their Prayers. And it is worth the marking, that so many persecutions together were restrained by God during this time, for it maketh it the more applicable unto the restraint insinuated in this seal, which can be found in persecutions at no other time.

12. We may add, that in no age the Church had more well qualified men, nor at any time had more appearing for her against all sorts of enemies, as may be witnessed by the Apologies of the foresaid *Quadratus*, *Aristides*, *Apollonius*, *Melito*, *Ashanus*, *Justin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, and sundry others, boldly and learnedly pleading the Christians cause against persecutors; and were presented to several Emperours. There was also much dispute with heathens, as *Origen contra Celsum*; with Jews, as *Justin, dialog. cum Tryphone*: and *Tertullian, adversus gentes & Judæos*. So also against many Hereticks, as witness *Ireneus* his writings, and *Tertullian, de Prescriptione adversus Hereticos*, yea, many able and holy men appearing also to prevent and remove schisms and differences in the Church, as is evident by *Ireneus* and *Polycarp* their pains and travell to keep a good understanding between the Churches in the East, and in the West: not only by writing serious exhortations to peace, and forbearance one of another, and in reproving the vehemency of some, too frequently advancing their own judgement with hurt to the Churches peace; but also by their travelling from East to West to compose their differences, whose labour for a time God blest, till about Anno 200. when *Victor* excommunicated the Churches of the East; which rash deed, is condemned by many. *Vide apud Euseb. Cent. Magd. Baron.* in the History belonging to that time.

By which we see, that as there was never more to do with well qualified Ministers, so was the Church well furnished with them; which doth well agree with the qualification of the third beast represented like a man in the type, as is said. By these Christian Religion was preserved from Heathens without, and vindicated from Hereticks within, and the substantials of the Gospel were kept from hurt. The white horse was still conquering, and many were brought in to Christ, so that the heathens Idolatrous Temples were almost desolate, no man haunting them; nor buying their Sacrifices, as the same *Plinius* in the foresaid place compleaneth; and yet there was no place almost where Christianity was not: and though all other Monarchies had their bounds, and were limited; yet this Dominion of Christs, had none, but spread over all; and therefore behooved to be the Son of God's, as *Tertul.* at length proveth, *Apol. cap. 37. &c.* Yea, Christians did so encrease, that (as the same Author affirmeth) had they but withdrawn from their Towns and Countries, they had left them almost desolate, and

terrible to the indwellers that remained, and yet all this was without humane force and help, but, as it were, by the alone voice of him whose Throne is amongst the four beasts. All which being considered, we suppose it will not be unanswerable to the type, nor any straining of the scope, thus to apply it, seeing this seal doth especially speak out these four, agreeing better to the event of this time than any other. As,

1. A decaying state of the Church in some things worse than the former, whereby she becometh black.

2. A remarkable restraint upon the instruments and effects of this sad decay.

3. A sort of seeming justice in the Authors and abettors of these evils.

4. With a sober improving of parts and abilities by the Ministers of the Church, in a rational way opposing themselves to these evils. All which we have found in the event, and therefore conceive it not unfitly to be resembled by this type, as differing both from the seal preceeding and the other following.

And from it thus understood, we may observe, 1. That the Church is subject to more sorts of trials than one; and when one cometh, there is readily a second that followeth before the outgate of that; and the last trial is ordinarily the saddest, and bringeth the Church lowest. *Obs.* 2. That men may be good, civil, and moral men in things belonging to the Commonwealth, and yet be exceeding great enemies to Religion and the Church. Or, That the most excellent men in the world for parts, if they be not sanctified, are often the greatest enemies of the Kingdom of Christ. The Church had peace under *Commodus* and *Heliogabalus*, but suffered by *Trajan*, *Severus*, *Hadrian*, and *Antoninus Pius*, whose government was excellent to the Commonwealth, which made many in that time without force submit themselves to the Romans; yet, in the matters of Religion, and what concerned the Church, there were none greater enemies to them; which proceedeth partly from the nature of fleshly wisdom, (*Rom. 8. 7.*) is enmity to God; partly, because men of that temper had more settled principles of persecution within them, not acting by profane furies as others, but from deluded zeal. This made them more eager, more constant, and more vehement in the pursuing of Christians, than the principles of profanity use to do, as we see in *Paul*, who in his blind zeal furthered persecution more than many others. 3. Because the more wise and civil one be without Religion, the more foolish doth Religion appear to him, and the more furnishing hath he to persecute with. 4. The persons of such men have more weight with others to provoke them to their practice, and to abhor, as a gross ill, the thing they persecute. It was nothing thought of to see *Nero* and *Domitian* persecute Christians; but when *Trajan*, *Antoninus Pius*, and such like, opposed Christianity, that made men abhor it, while such men (otherwise blameless) cried out upon it: and this ground maketh the devil especially aim to engage such in to persecution; and therefore in the first ten persecutions, we will find that the Church suffered never more nor oftner than by such men. *Obs.* 3. A thriving estate of the Gospel, doth not usually long want errors and offences from within following it, as well as persecution from without. The black horse followeth the white, almost as soon as the red; as Christ hath foretold, a sword should follow the Gospel; so doth *Paul* of heresies, that they must be in the Church, *1 Corin. 1. 19.* *1 Tim. 4. ver. 1.* How soon in the Apostles dayes crept in false teachers, and deceitful workers in the Church of *Corinth* and *Galatia*? *Hymeneus*, *1 Tim. 1. ver. 20.* *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, *2 Tim. 2. 17.* The *Nicolaitans* and *Jezebel*, *Revel. 2. 3.* After followed *Ebion* and *Cerinthus*. The devil in Gods righteous judgement keeping this way, (as it is *Revel. 12.*) to spew out a flood of error after the Church when the sword of open persecution by the Dragon doth not devour her. The devils aim in this,

this, is, first to carry many away by that snare, who have stood firm against external violence. Experience teacheth us, that many have continued constant in the time of persecution, and have not ceded to any terror, yet have been withdrawn from truth, by error. 2. By this, he maketh the Church more hateful and odious to onlookers, when he obscureth her beauty by error and schism from within her self, than can be by persecution from without, as in the event is clear. Hence it is that our blessed Lord, (Job. 17. 17, 21, 22.) prayeth more for truth and unity amongst His followers, as conducing more to their native beauty, than He doth pray for outward peace and prosperity to to them. Gods end again, in overruling this trial of the Church, is, that these who are approved may be made manifest, 1 Cor. 11.

Obs. 4. That no trial darkeneth the Church more, nor maketh her blacker than error and schism within her self: this striketh at the soul and life of Religion, Amos 8. 11. with 12. maketh the fair Virgins to faint and fall with thirst: this maketh darkness where there was light, confusion where there was order, envying and strife where there was love, and giveth much occasion to others to speak evil of the Church. Obs. 5. There are some special times when Ministers and others ought to improve their parts for the advantage of the Church, and when they must not only suffer as calves, but dispute as men; which is especially called-for, when light is in hazard to be obscured in the Church.

## LECTURE V.

Verf. 7. *And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come, and see.*

8. *And I looked, and behold, a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was Death, and hell followed with him: and power was given unto them, over the fourth part of the earth to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.*

**W**E have already opened three seals: now followeth the fourth, which, at the first appearing, holdeth forth some terrible event more sad than any of the former, as the particular description will clear.

It hath, as the former, these three, 1. A word, calling, *Come and see.* 2. A type representing something to come. 3. A word added for explication.

For the first, it is common with the rest, When the Lamb had opened the fourth seal, I heard the fourth beast say, *Come, and see.* This Preface is the same, save that he is the fourth beast, which (Chap. 4. 7.) is like an Eagle, whereby is holden forth the sharp sightedness, and learning, with a heavenly high fleeing (so to speak) strain of spirit called-for amongst the Ministers of the Gospel. This fourth beast, is reserved for this type, because then such qualifications amongst Ministers should be most necessary, and also should be by God bestowed upon them during this time, while death was so frequent in the Church, and temporary contentments so blasted. Therefore Ministers were to soar on high themselves, and to call others upward with them, this fleeing and mounting being a special property of the Eagle, Isa. 40. 31. Jer. 40. 16. Job 39. 27. Prov. 23. 5.

2. For the type it self, the matter of it, is the same with the former, a horse and a rider; But in every other circumstance different, 1. His colour is pale, pointing forth a further degree of the Churches affliction: she was before fainting and swooning, but now draweth near to death, as the words afterward clear. 2. The rider is named with a terrible name, *he that sat on him was Death*: which holdeth forth, 1. A spreading of death to many, so it is expounded, a fourth part of the shall be killed. 2. That there should be many sorts of death, and many ways to put an end to mens lives, as, Sword, Famine, Pestilence, &c. 3. He getteth this name of *Death*, to import the cruel kinds of death which Christians should be obnoxious to under this horrid and barbarous persecution, beyond what formerly they felt. The third thing peculiar to this rider, is, his convoy, which is suitable to his name, and further expresseth the terribleness of the event, *and hell, or the grave, followed with him.* The meaning is, that death and mortality was so frequent, that in every place were graves, and that this dispensation brought men so frequently to death, that where ever it came, there

was need of graves to receive them. 1. We expound it rather of the grave, than hell, in this place, not only because the same word in Hebrew and Greek doth signifie both; but because it is ordinary to them, in expressing a desperate-like condition, to joyn death and the grave together, Job 17. 1. and 13. And 2. because this death especially relateth unto the Church; and therefore must be understood of the grave, rather than of hell.

The third thing, is, a word added for explication, *To them was given power over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, Famine, Pestilence, and Death, and with the beasts of the earth.* In which explication, these things are implied, 1. A Commission, that this rider getteth; he is not absolute, to go and do as he pleaseth, but it is said, *power was given unto them*: whereby Gods Sovereignty and active Providence over the saddest dispensations of the Church is holden forth. This power, is said to be given to them, in the plural number; either because, 1. It looketh both to death and the grave. Or, 2. rather to this horse with the former two, seeing all these seem to be running together in this seal; and the grave is rather to receive men dead, than to kill according to this Commission.

2. The Commission it self which they get, and the extent of it, is, *to kill a fourth part of the earth.* To kill, holdeth forth the errand, horrid acts of cruelty, and murder. A fourth part; this doth both shew the extent and limitation of their Commission, that it should be many, even a fourth part; and yet not all, it is but a fourth part, being a definit for a indefinite number. It is said to kill a fourth part of the earth: by which, is not understood the world as contradistinguished from the Church; that will not agree with the cry of the souls under the following seal, (it being these that cry there, who are killed here) But we understand here the Militant Church on earth, as formerly under the second seal; there being the same scope in both.

3. This explication holdeth forth the particular weapons, as it were, by which that great murder is to be executed, to wit, *Sword, Famine*, (which two were made use of in the second and third seals) *death, and the beasts of the earth.* By death may be understood the Pestilence, called the mortality, because so many ordinarily die by it. And these four here do certainly



allude to Gods four great plagues, under which ordinarily is holden forth by the Prophets, Gods singular Judgement. For this end also *beasts* are added; which we conceive is not so much properly and literally to be understood, as it is with allusion unto the expression of the Prophets formerly mentioned; and may point at these three here, 1. At the greatness of this strait, wherein such a deluge should at once set upon the Church, as if Gods four plagues were let loose together, there being but one under each of the former seals, to wit, *Sword*, or *Famine*; here these evils continue, and two more are added, to wit, *Death*, and the *beasts* of the earth: which doth certainly hold forth a greater degree of persecution than was before. 2. By *beasts*, we may understand absurd, unreasonable, and beastly men, as 2 *Thess.* 2. 2. Such *Paul* fought with at *Ephesus*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 32. Of this sort was *Nero*, 2 *Tim.* 4. and of such the faithful Martyr *Polycarp* complaineth in his Epistles, *apud Euseb.* who thought long for the Lions and beasts, unto which he was condemned to be casten, that he might be freed from these beasts (his keepers) which were worse than the former. 3. By *beasts* we may understand that kind of death frequently used by persecuters, (especially in the last persecutions) their hungering of ravenous beasts, and then, for a sport, casting Christians unto them. It being thus understood, it may hold out that plague of beasts, as it doth peculiarly relate to the Church, in which also men were instrumental, committing that murder by beasts under this seal, as by *Famine* under the former. However, this is certain, that this pointeth at some dreadful condition of the Church beyond the former, wherein persecution is at an height (malice leaving no mean untried for undoing of the Church) and wherein the Saints are prest to double their cries to God for vengeance, as in the following seal; and so it appeareth to be at, or immediately before, the fall of the Heathenish persecution. Before we make particular application thereof, we may observe some things useful for understanding the rest of the seals.

As, 1. That this seal with the former two, doth signify sad things unto the Church; for that they are all of one kind, appeareth by the gradation which is clear and conspicuous in them. The *red horse* woundeth, the *black horse* fainteth, the *pale* killeth. 2. Hence also it is said, power is given unto them together, as having one Commission. And 3. Considering, that *sword*, *famine* and *death*, are joyned together under this seal, to signify a strait in the highest degree: when they are separated, they must also be understood to point at things of the same kind; and therefore what ever is found to be the nature and object of any one of those contained in the three seals, must be understood of all, though in a different degree. Seeing then that some of them hold forth clearly the afflictions of the Church, it must be so in the rest also. 2. It appeareth, that by these *riders* we are to understand the dispensation, or event it self, signified in these seals more than any particular actor, who is either the supream or inferiour cause of it; here the *rider* is death; and consequently we may call the first, *victory*; the second, *war* or *violence*; the third, *Famine*, by the same reason whereby this is called *death*. 3. That one seal doth not end, in respect of the event contained in it, when an other beginneth. Here are both *sword* and *famine* under this seal, though *death* and *beasts* be added to it. 4. We may gather, that these types are to be applyed to special times, and do not only hold forth in general the kinds of rods and judgements, which were to come upon the Church; for, the repetition of *sword* and *famine* by this seal, saith, such judgements were to continue during the time this seal relateth unto, as had been exercising the Church under the former seals, otherwise the repetition were needlesse. 5. It appeareth, that these plagues are not literally to be understood according to the letter of the word of explication, and therefore must some way be figuratively taken, else it cannot be

told how to expound that of *hell following* and *beasts*, if it be not to hold forth, by allusion to them, some sad dispensation on the Church, as hath been said.

In application of this prophesie to a particular time and event, there are two opinions, even amongst these who agree in this, to wit, that the first period of bloody persecution, which ends about *Constantins* time, about the year three hundred and ten, is typified by this prophesie of the seals. Some make four steps of these persecutions; the second seal, (that is, the first seal that typifieth persecution, to wit, the second; for, the first is of an other kind) comprehending the first two persecutions of *Nero* and *Domitian*; the third seal to them comprehendeth the third persecution of *Trajan*, with the fourth of *Anton. Philos.* the fifth, of *Seyrus*; the sixth, of *Maximinus*. Under the fourth seal, they take in the seventh persecution raised by *Decius*; the eighth, raised by *Gallus*, or *Valerianus*, or *Volusianus*; and the ninth, rather intended than executed, by *Aurelianus*, who being so terrified by thunder immediately after his subscribing of the Edict, that he instantly recalled it. These who so reckon, under the fourth persecuting seal (which is the fifth in order, wherein the cry of the Saints is expressed) do comprehend that great and last persecution of *Dioclesian*. By this reckoning, this seal relateth to the events, betwixt *Decius* persecution inclusively, and *Dioclesians* exclusively; and the fifth seal following doth contain the story of the last persecution in its highest degree of cruelty on the earth. There is no material hazard in this; yet considering, that by the seal, persecution is set forth at its height, so that if we look to the *rider*, *Death*, or his convoy *Hell*, or the *Grave*, or his Commission to *kill* so many, or his weapons, having *Sword*, *Famine*, *Death*, and *Beasts* going together, we can hardly conceive persecution at a greater height: and therefore we incline rather to make but three steps in these persecutions, and so to include that last and most horrid massacre by *Dioclesian* under this seal, and to take the seal following as expressing no new matter, but added for explication and consolation in reference to the foregoing sad events; and therefore differeth in the type, common to the first four seals, as will be more particularly clear in the opening of it.

This seal then containeth the sad condition of the Church under the last persecution of *Dioclesian*, taking in with it the former interval after the persecution of *Decius*, 1. Because in in this time persecution came to its height, the Church having now all her former trials lying upon her, and new degrees added to the former; partly, because it is the trial immediately going before the change of the Churches persecuted condition (the cry of souls, and the comfortable answer in the seal following, being the result of this sad condition; ) partly, because the story in the event and particulars of that persecution, will be found exceeding answerable to this type: which we shall consider, 1. in general; and then, 2. in the particular circumstances thereof.

1. In the general, the Church, after *Decius* his persecution, almost (except in that of *Gallus* and *Aurelianus*) had peace in a great measure from outward persecution, for the space of forty four years together; but, during that time, had fallen from the simple purity and power of the Gospel into jarres, divisions, and strivings amongst themselves, as *Euseb. lib.* 8. *Chap.* 1. and many others observe) by which, God was provoked, and the Church made contemptible: upon which, followed this horrid persecution, begun in the nineteenth year of *Dioclesian*, about the three hundred year. This *Dioclesian*, being engaged in many wars, choosed for a Colleague to himself in the Empire one *Herculeus Maximianus*; and while their wars encreased, every one of them choose a helper to themselves, who were called *Cesars*, yet had not the stile of *Augustus*, as the Emperours had. *Dioclesian* choose one *Maximinus* to help him

in the East, who is also called *Iovius*. *Maximianus* choosed *Constantius*, Governour of *Britain*; he was *Constantius* father, and a good man. These Emperours set themselves together to root out Christianity out of all the Provinces of the Empire, joyning together craft and violence for that end: 1. Putting to the choice of the Souldiers and Officers to Sacrifice with them to Idols, or to quit their service. 2. Making that same offer to Magistrates, with promises to both if they should obey. 3. By throwing down all Churches. 4. Inhibiting all meetings of Christians, and such like. And when these wrought not their end, they fell to open violence, giving out publick Edicts against Christians, stirring up all against them, and following their cruelty so hotly with a profane emulation, who should go beyond others in persecuting (save *Constantius* who was still friendly to Christians) that almost no Province of the Empire was free: and the number of Martyres, is by all, during that time, counted innumerable.

To make out the conformity of the event with this type, take these particular considerations, which will evidence the horridness of this persecution; which is called *Turbo persecutionis*. 1. That it was universal through all the Empire, and executed by so many prime persecuters, combining together in several parts for that end. 2. For length of time, it continued full ten years in this heat. 3. Particular instances of some places may give us to conjecture at the whole; in particular places often there would be hundreths in a day, whole Churches full, burnt at once; some whole Cities, refusing to sacrifice to Idols and calling themselves Christians, were burnt; whole Legions of Christian Souldiers (being in number six thousand six hundred and sixty) were put to death. One Legion is instanced, who, (after a most Godly Oration to *Maximianus* by *Mauritius* their Commander,) with him were killed, because they refused to act in persecuting Christians (even after they twice were declaimed for that cause) though they willingly yeilded to serve against all publick enemies. In some places, the blood of the slain, of itself made little brooks, and coloured great rivers, as it is in *Foxe*, pag. 103. and *Euseb. lib. 8. Chap. 11. and 12. also Chap. 10.* who affirmeth he hath seen the actors of that persecution so outwearied, and their swords so blunted with killing, that they behoooved to be relieved with fresh actors. In one moneth of that time, seventeenth thousand are reckoned to be killed, and by *Made in locum*, (out of famous writers) that in *Egypt* alone (which was but one little Province of many, belonging to the Empire) there were one hundreth fourty and four thousand Martyres: which may give a hint of what great number the whole, put together, might draw to. 4. The diversity of deaths used by these persecuters on the Christians, may be gathered, First, From the many engines purposely made for that end, as Iron grates to roast on, Brazen Bulls, Iron pikes in Barrels, and such like, never heard of before. Secondly, The many ways used to kill them, drawing with Horses, cleaving with Trees, casting to wild Beasts, sending to Sea, in Boats without any Provision, and thousands of this kind to be seen *Foxe* his table of these tortures, and in *Euseb. lib. 8.* who affirmeth there was an emulation among the wicked people, who might invent the most torturing deaths unto Christians. 5. This cruelty may appear by this, that none of whatsoever relation were spared, friends, neices, children were put to death: yea, this *Dioclesian* put his own wife *Sirena* to death upon that account. And as no natural relation, so no good offices of the most faithful friends, found place to divert that rage. It is reported of one *Eusebius*, who having returned victor over these enemies against whom he was sent, that, on the day of his triumph, and entry to the City, he and his Family was put to death, because he refused to sacrifice with the Emperour at his entry, professing himself to be a Christian unto the Emperour, who out of honour to him

had gone forth to meet him. 6. Adde to these, the great mortality and deaths that were throughout the world in this *Dioclesian* time. It is recorded by *Euseb. lib. 8. Cap. 10.* that men died faster than the living were able to bury them: by which it came to passe, that dogs were so accustomed to eat dead mens flesh, that they became a terrour to the living lest they should eat them also, which made them in all places endeavour the killing of all dogs, as is recorded by him. 7. Consider, that many excellent Ministers stepped out at this time to comfort Gods people, and to draw their minds upward to a creature-contemning and spiritual walk, as *Arnobius*, and *Cyprian*, who upon a very like occasion, wrote his Treatise, *de mortalitate*, under the ninth persecution. From all which considerations, we may see an event answerable to the type, which may be well called *death*, with such a convoy, commission, and arms, as this rider hath, yet was there even such a restraint, as made the Church have still a being in despite of them, as will be more clear in the following seals. From which also we may gather these Observations.

1. That there may be many sad trials past unto Gods people; and yet more sad before them: Or, That the saddest trials come often last, like womens travelling, the sharpest showres come last immediatly before a delivery. There is no warrant for Gods people to limit their own trials, or to sit down upon beginnings. 2. After-trials have ordinarily some other circumstances and aggravations beyond the former, as we may see by the gradations of these seals. Trials are like Physick to Gods people; therefore there is a necessity of new ingredients to purge away such humours and corruptions as former potions have not reached. 3. When trials begin on Gods people, they ordinarily come to some great height ere there be a turn, 1 *Sam. 3. 12.* God hath ordinarily some more than ordinary cause in bringing them, which He will accomplish: and often men are not brought to His design by smaller rods; therefore is there yet seven times more and seven times more added unto the former, as it is, *Levit. 26.* 4. God will sometimes give persecuters great seeming advantage, and will bring His Church very low under them. We might be ashamed to fret or repine under our sufferings, which are not worth to be mentioned in comparison of these here. 5. Though death and the grave, &c. be terrible; yet God hath them ordered in all the circumstances of them, they are limited by Him, and are not boundlesse in their Commission. They are ordered by Him, and neither death, famine, nor pestilence walk at random. It is observed that the *Pestilence* in Hebrew is expressed by a word *DEBER*, which signifieth speech or command, because, how ever it walk in darknesse as to men, yet walketh it not one step without Gods word of command. This may be said of all other trials or deaths, which are as precisely regulated by God. 6. We may gather, that the most horrid massacres of Gods people cannot wrong them, nor marr Gods design concerning them. All these trials do but (as *Polycarp* said of the beasts teeth to which he was to be casten) as a Mill, grind them, that they might as good wheat be fitted for their Lords table. 7. We may gather, Gods peoples happiness, and the evidence of Gods love to them, do not consist in outward things, their lot is oftner suffering from one seal to another. Death, the King of terrors (1 *Job 18. 14.*) marcheth upon them, whileas the world seemeth to be in Covenant with him. These are old truths, That through many afflictions is the way to Glory, and who so will live Godly, shall suffer persecution. Gods people would make for trials, seeing these words are yet unscripced out of the Bible; and the story of these times do confirm it: for, however there may be difference in the naming of Instruments, timing of events, and other circumstances among Writers; yet, in the main they agree.



## LECTURE VI

Verf. 9. *And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimonie which they held.*

**I**N the former three seals we have heard many sad events prophesied of, to befall the Church, every one sadder than the former, till at last, Death and the Grave came as the yondmost step of temporal affliction, so that men might now be in a doubt what had become of the many souls that had been murdered for Jesus Christ, and if it had not been better to have wanted the white Horse and his rider, or not to have stuck so to the profession of the Gospel, than to have suffered so many sad things for it.

The scope of this seal, is, to remove that doubt, and to comfort against that temptation, that though persecution should come to the height they can reach unto, that is, to take away the life of the body; yet was not their happiness marred by it: they have souls (unto which persecution doth not reach) which after death enjoy blessedness; and therefore their trouble is not to be feared at, nor exchanged with the tranquillity of worldly men, nor suffering to be shunned for fear of any hazard which accompanieth it.

This is the scope, which is here made out in these four, 1. By shewing that the souls of Believers have a life after the body is killed, and a comfortable being in the enjoying of God; *I saw* (saith he) *the souls, &c.* 2. By shewing that their death is precious in Gods sight, and that vengeance on their persecutors is as certain, as if their cry unto God day and night, for that end, were ascending, and He particularly taking notice of it. 3. By shewing the wise ends for which God suspendeth that vengeance; which proceedeth not from his forgetting of them, but is so ordered for the accomplishing of his own designs. 4. By holding forth Gods present kindness unto the souls of these murdered persons in cloathing them with white robes, so that the suspension of Gods vengeance upon their persecutors, is no let nor interruption to that present happiness or comfortable enjoying of God. This is the sum of the words, which are more Doctrinal than Propheticall, trysted with the former sad condition of the Church, to be a consolation unto Believers, and an encouragement against the former great straits, as is said. We take up the matter in these two, 1. In something which *John* saw. 2. In that which *John* heard: which also hath two parts, First, A sad cry, Secondly, A comfortable answer to it. The seal differeth from the former seals in these three. 1. That it hath no type of horse nor rider, as all the former have. 2. That it hath no voice, calling, Come, and see. 3. That it relateth not to any such particular time, as the former do; but its scope, is common to all these persecutions. As when he saith, *I saw the souls of them that were slain, &c.* it is not to be restricted to the souls of men slain at such and such a time; but is applicable to all slain for such a cause, especially these under all the former persecutions, as the prayer, *How long, &c.* importeth. The reason of which we conceive to be, because the scope of this seal, is not prophetically to point out new events, and to relate to a particular time, But to lay down some solide grounds of comfort to Gods people, as is said, Concerning which, these things are clear, 1. That this seal looketh to the most sad condition of the Church, when souls are so put to it, to cry as if they could endure no longer. 2. That it relateth to former sufferings, and that not for a short time, but for sufferings of some continuance. Their complaint, that their blood is spilt,

implieth their sufferings to be past; and their cry, *How long*, implyeth their continuance under suffering for a time: and therefore must relate to the sufferings mentioned under the former seals, as is said. 3. That the matter contained here must be understood rather Spiritually, as it pointeth at the scope, than literally as the words bear: for, properly souls can neither be seen nor heard, and so also in other circumstances, but the Spirit maketh use of such expressions for setting forth the reality and certainty of the thing intended.

More particularly to come to the words, in what *John* saw, *vers. 9.* These three are to be considered, 1. What he saw, *the souls of them that were slain*, to wit, of Martyres. 2. Where he saw them, to wit, *under the altar*. 3. We have the properties whereby he describeth these Martyrs and differenceth them from others, *They were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimonie which they held.*

1. By soul here (which elsewhere is called Spirit, *Acts 7. 59. Luke 23. 46. Eccles. 12. 7.*) is understood that immortal substance which God breathed in mans body when it was made, whereby man became a living soul, 1. *Corinth. 15. 45.* The soul, thus understood, is contradistinguished from the body, as that which cannot be killed when the body is killed, *Mat. 10. 28.* In this sense it is taken here, where there is a proof given of that which Christ asserteth in that place of *Matthew* cited: and though the soul be not the object of the eye, yet are they thus expressed as represented to *John*, to shew the reality of their existence and being, even when separated from the body.

2. The place where they are seen, it is said he saw them *under the altar*. There was then no material Temple (that of *Jerusalem* being destroyed;) So neither by the altar can be understood any material altar: for, in heaven where we must conceive these souls to be, there is neither material altar nor Temple: and to say these souls were under any altar on earth, (suppose such were) were to contradict the scope, and overturn the consolation that is intended, and would involve many absurdities concerning the nature of the soul, its speaking and being under an altar; which were also literally to be understood, if that concerning the altar were: both then must be figuratively understood, to set out one or all of these three, 1. The happiness of these souls, which not only have a being, but exist in a notable safe and comfortable condition in a special nearness to God, as under His altar which was so much delighted in and longed after by the Saints in their life, It is like alluding to these places, *Psal. 31. 20. 84. 3. 91.* 1. For, as the Tabernacle was a special signe of Gods presence, so the altar was a special part of the furniture of the Tabernacle; and it would seem that He looketh on the Martyrs as so many sacrifices offered unto God, as *Paul* speaketh, *Philip. 2. 17. 2 Tim. 4. 6.* thereby to hold out a special respect that God puteth upon them. 2. More especially, this expression pointeth out these souls to be in Heaven: the most Holy was a type of Heaven, as it is expounded, *Heb. 9. 10.* And *Heb. 9. 12.* it is said when Christ entered into Heaven, He entered into the most holy. The altar was before the most holy; and therefore we conceive this must be understood of the glory of Heaven, Heaven being that where Christ is; and Christs presence, (*Philip.*

(*Phil. 1. 21.*) is the company that the souls of Martyrs are to enjoy; and therefore it must be where he is, which Christ on the Cross (*Luk. 23.*) calleth *Paradise* unto the thief. 4. Most especially by the altar must be understood Christ Jesus; by whom we have access to God, of whom the Tabernacle and all its furniture was typical, and who is called *our altar*, *Heb. 13. 10.* by whom we and all our services; yea, even the deaths of Martyrs are sanctified and made acceptable to God. This we conceive must be understood, because other Scriptures hold forth him, and nearness with him, to be the happiness of souls departed; and because it is that which made Martyrs so despise suffering, that they might be with Christ, *Philip. 1. 21.* and because it agreeth best with their own prayers and desires under suffering, as in *Stephen*, *Act. 7. 59.* All cometh to this, to shew, that they enjoyed a most happy condition and Communion with God, but is set forth under an expression belonging to the service of the Tabernacle of the Old Testament, as many other things of this prophesie are.

The third thing to be considered, is, the description of these Martyrs, which is especially drawn from the cause of their suffering, (it being an old maxime, *Non est mors, sed causa mortis que facit Martyrem*) which is laid down in two expressions, the first is, *for the Word of God*; that is the first character, to be adhering to the faith of the Gospel revealed in the Word, and to be a conscientious practiser of Righteousness according to that same rule, and not shunning to suffer any thing rather than to depart from these. In this they were led, not as to follow their own humours, or to propagate their own inventions, or any way to seek themselves, but out of respect unto God and His will revealed in his Word. The second is, *for the testimony which they held*: this looketh to the outward profession and confession of that truth, which in their heart they believed. Christ calleth it (*Matth. 10.*) a confessing him before men. And (*Rom. 10.*) the Apostle distinguisheth confession with the mouth from believing with the heart: which two, being put together, hold forth a well ordered conversation both in Faith and Practice. In Faith that they believed right concerning Christ; in Practice, that they were answerable to it, and held forth that word of life by a good example, as a witness to others, and when called unto it, they did not shun the testifying of both upon any peril. In sum, all cometh to this, by opening the fifth seal, was represented to me the happy condition of the souls of the Martyrs in heaven, who were accounted by God to have lost their lives, not for the calumnies and slanders imputed to them by men, but for testifying unto his truth. This being clearly the meaning of the words (the contrary whereof, to wit, the miserable condition after death of these who seem happy in the world, and are not happy in God, is joyned with this in the parable of the rich glutton and *Lazarus*, *Luk. 16.*) there is no ground here, either of approving of altars under the Gospel, or of sanctifying them by burying of the reliques of Martyrs under them; which are amongst the superstitions of the Papists. It is a poor altar that is sanctified, and doth not sanctifie its offerings. Beside, neither was there Churches or altars in this time, neither could the Martyrs who were so numerous be buried under them, but they were decently buried together in places called *Cameteria*, as is plain from the story of these times.

From this Verse we may observe. 1. That though Gods people be liable to many sufferings, yet, their consolations being considered, do far exceed them all. 2. That Gods people are not to place their consolation on this side of time; it consisteth most in their comfortable being, and enjoying of God after this. 3. That in suffering times, they would comfort themselves in the happy outgate of their sufferings, and look more to these things which are eternal, than to the things seen, which are but temporal. 4. It is a certain truth that

souls have a life and being, when the body turneth unto dust, and that they exist, being separated from bodies. The soul at mans Creation was differenced from the body, as not being made of that substance, but in a peculiar way was created and infused by God, *Gen. 2.* At death the soul is contradistinguished from the body, *Mat. 10. 28.* the one dieth, the other cannot. After death they are differenced also, both in respect of the Godly and wicked, as these places, (*Eccles. 12. 7. Phil. 1. 23. Acts 59.* Christs word to the Thief, *Luk. 7. 23.* and that parable of the rich glutton and *Lazarus*) abundantly do clear. 5. The souls of believers, especially of sufferers, are in a most happy condition after death, to wit, under the altar, in Paradise *Abrahams* bosome, with Christ Jesus, &c. God hath a special care of the souls of all his Saints; they are precious to him, their reward is great in heaven, *Mat. 5.* and sufferers with him, they do in a special manner reign with him; which being well considered, there would be no great cause to scare at suffering. 6. From the description of these Martyrs, *Observe*, That it is not every suffering for every thing which will denominate one a Martyr of Christ; it must be for the Word of God, and for that testimony, or it is not to be so accounted. It is recorded, (by *Baron* an 19. of *Dioclesian*) that in these primitive persecutions, especially that last, that many assumed to themselves out of pride, and had ascribed unto them by others the title of Martyrs unjustly; wherefore it was appointed, that where any Christians suffered, the cause of their sufferings should be diligently observed, that these who were found worthy might be enrolled, and that none other but such should be accounted so. This afterward turned to much superstition, and gave occasion to that superstitious canonizing of Saints, which afterward followed in the Church of *Rome*; yet had it an honest intent in the authors thereof: as first, To keep the credit of Martyrdom from that contempt which came upon it, when men that were scandalous in their conversation, were so reputed. 2. To bound that carnal itching pride in many, who because of that honour to be accounted Martyrs, thrust themselves unwarrantably into suffering. This honour was especially denied to three sorts of sufferers, 1. To these who by Prophaness in their Conversation, Heresie in their Doctrine, Schism in their Practice, had walked unbecoming the Gospel. Hence the Catholics (so the Orthodox were called) when they were led to suffering with *Marcionites*, *Novatians*, or others suchlike, (for sometimes persecution raged upon all that were Christians by name) did still disclaim all fellowship with these Hereticks in their errors as not accounting them witnesses to Christ in their sufferings. A second sort that were denied, were such as without Gods call, by their rashness occasioned their own suffering, such as these who being unasked, professed they were Christians, and that they had the Bible, but would not give it. A third sort refused, were such as had suffered in their confessions formerly, though afterward they should become sufferers: this was not done, as if they accounted themselves not Martyrs indeed; but that thereby they might prevent fainting when any should be called to a testimony. So *Baron*, pag. 646. and 760. where he setteth down the decree of one *Misjuvius*, a Bishop in *Africa*, ordaining one that occasioned their own sufferings, to be enrolled; and giving this reason for it, *Quia non divino instinctu ducti, sed temeritate acti, id faciunt.*

7. *Observe*, That the giving of a Testimony by outward confession of the truth when called for, is necessary and commendable as well as soundness of Faith; yea, it is oftentimes the outward testifying of the truth before men, more than the Faith of it before God that bringeth on suffering; and there was nothing more abhorred in the Primitive Christians than dissembling of a testimony, to evite suffering as appeareth in *Augustines* writings *de Mendacio & contra Mendacium*.



and the Writings of others to that purpose : wherein three sorts that crept in in these times , are sharply condemned. As first, These who called themselves *Nicomedites* ( but falsely from *Nicodemus*, who is said to come to Christ by night, and not openly ) alleaging it to be enough to be inwardly sound and to keep their heart , mind and intention clean , though they did not evince or expresse that soundness to others : Such thought they might be Christians, and yet let none other know it. A second sort were the *Priscilianists*, who being most vile Hereticks ( particularly asserting the soul to be a part of Gods substance ) did also maintain and practise this, that they might hide their opinions, and carry so with these they conversed with, as if they were of one mind with them. A third sort were such as out of mislead zeal to discover the former, did counterfeit as if they had been maintainers of that error , to make these Hereticks the more freely to communicate their tenets unto them. The Primitive Fathers utterly condemned all these , as inconsistent with Christian simplicity, which requireth a testimony of the mouth as well as Faith in the heart.

*Obs.* 8. That every truth of the word may be a ground of suffering warrantably : for, the least thing that hath a truth in it, as well as the more concerning fundamental truths are the Word of GOD , and so not to be dispensed with by his people.

9. Every truth in the Word hath an outward testimony joyned to it , and sometimes may be called for upon very great hazards.

10. When it is called for, this testimony or confession to any truth before men, is no less necessary, and ought as peremptorily to be held and stuck to as the former : therefore it is called (*Rom. 10.*) confession unto salvation , and called for by a peremptory certification , *Matth. 10. 32, 33.*

*Obser.* 11. That these who are sound in the Faith of the Word, will be also exceeding tenacious of their testimony. In Scripture, and in primitive times, we will find the Saints sticking at, and hazarding themselves on things which appear of very small moment , yet were to them of great concernment, because of the testimony which was involved in them, which they would not let go. Such was *Mordecai*, *Ester 3.* *Daniel 6.*

his not shutting of this windowes. When this persecution of *Dioclesian* began , the persecuters sought but the Bibles , the poor Coats, Money, or Cups, ( wherewith they served ) to be given them , as some evidence of their ceding ; but they refused to accept deliverance upon these terms : yea , when the Souldiers, partly wearying to be so bloody, partly desirous of seeming victory over Christians, did profess themselves content to take any old paper or clout in place of the Bible , or poors Coats : they refused to give any *ecvola* ( as it was called from the Greek, *εὐβάλλω* ) or cast-away clout ; yea , when Souldiers would violently pluck such things from them against their wills, they would follow them, professing their adherence unto the truth, and that they had not any way willingly delivered these things, as is to be seen in *Baronius An. 303. pag. 748.* It is reported of one *Marcus Arethusius*, who was put to torment under *Julian* , because he would not build the Idol Temple, which he had formerly demolished , when they were content to accept some part of the expenses from him, and to spare his life, he refused to give *obolum*, or one penny , *Sozom. lib. 5. 9. cent. 4. pag. 797, and 833.* *Tertullian* also ( *de Corona militis* ) maketh mention of a Christian Souldier, who when others after their victory carried their Crowns upon their heads for honour of their Idols, he , notwithstanding of all hazard, carried his in his hand, professing himself to be a Christian. By which and many other instances, we may see how resolutely they held fast their testimony : from which especially they were called *Martyrs* , or *Witnesses* ; and by which often , not only many weak ones were strengthened, but also many persecuters convinced, and made to cry out, *certainly great is the God of the Christians* , while as they saw that no allurements on the one side, nor terrors on the other could make them loose their grips, but still Truth and Christ were born witness unto , and well spoken of by them. That is a good word which *Polycarp* had to the *Proconsul* ( who took much pains to draw him to ply himself, and to deny Christ by his swearing by the life or good fortune of the Emperour ) he refused , saying , These four-score and six years have I served him, and he hath never once done me wrong, How then can I deny him ?

## LECTURE VII.

*Verf. 10. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood, on them that dwell on the earth ?*

*11. And white robes were given to every one of them , and it was said unto them , that they should rest yet for a little season, untill their fellow-servants also , and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.*

**W**E come now to the second thing in this seal, that is, what *John* heard in these two, 1. A serious suit. 2. A gracious, yet a wise return. The suit is in these words, *verf. 10. And they cried with a loud voice , saying , How long Lord , dost thou not avenge our blood ? &c.*

Concerning this cry, we would premit these generals, 1. We are not to conceive that souls audibly speak to the ears of men, more than they are visible to their eyes , seeing they want material organs : It is therefore to be understood with respect to the scope only, as we said in the former. 2. Neither have souls in Glory any sense of sufferings, as if they were affected

with them ; It is not consistent with that happy estate where-in they are, as absolutely free of all tribulation and anxiety, and will not admit of any such thing. 3. Nor do they carry any revengeful thoughts to heaven, to desire vengeance for particular wrongs done unto them : that agreeth not to Saints, as Saints, on earth, much less in heaven, where there is a perfect purity. 4. Neither are they conscious of the particular sufferings of Saints on earth, *Isaiah 63. 16.* yet may this cry of vengeance be applyed to them in a threefold sense, 1. As it expresseth their respect to their Head Christ, whose final victory they in a holy way long for , desiring to have all his enemies under his feet, as will be at the last day, which is the day of their full Redemption. 2. As it proceedeth from their sympathy

sympathy with the rest of the members of Christs body; in which respect, they may be said to long for the perfecting of the Bride, and the vindicating of her in general from all her sufferings. 3. It may be understood of the guilt that sticketh to their persecutors from their innocent suffering, which in some sense pleadeth for vengeance from God on the persecutors even after their death; as it is said of *Abels* blood, *Gen. 4.* that it cried to God against *Cain*: to which, it is like, this doth allude; so that crying for vengeance, signifieth this much, that their innocent sufferings are not forgotten by God, but are as effectual to procure vengeance from him who is holy and true, as if they were daily crying for it.

More particularly, this Prayer hath three parts, 1. The petition it self, to wit, Vengeance. 2. The object against whom they pray. 3. The Arguments whereby this Petition is enforced.

The Petition is in these words, laid down by way of complaint, *Dost thou not avenge our blood?* including in it a desire, that their blood might be avenged, in the sense formerly laid down. We take it mainly to respect Gods final sentencing of persecutors at the last day of Judgement, 1. Because many of these, whose guilt made them liable to this vengeance during the former persecutions, were already dead, and so were without the reach of temporal Judgements. 2. Because it is such a vengeance, which is sought, that putteth an end to persecution, as the reason of suspending this vengeance, which is given in the answer, clearerth it, to wit, that their brethren and fellow-servants were yet to be killed, and therefore there behooved to be a suspending to satisfie that desire. 3. Because the guilt of Saints blood, draweth on that judgement, and the ends mentioned, to wit, Christs final victory, and the Saints absolute freedom, do import no less; yet may it have its partial fulfilling by temporal judgements at particular times upon particular persons, as might contribute in part to the vindicating of truth and the former ends, such as Gods judgments upon persecutors under the following seal may be said to be, alwayes reserving the full decision between Gods People and their enemies untill the great day, wherein this petition shall be fully satisfied.

2. The object of this petition, *the men that dwell on the earth*: not as if all that were upon the earth were included under this imprecation, their being many Godly then living in the world, but they are so designed, 1. Because often, and particularly in these times, the generality of the men of the world are persecutors, and by acting, conniving, approving, delighting, or such like wayes, do make themselves guilty one way or other of the blood of Saints. 2. They are so styled, to shew, what sort of men they mean, to wit, wicked men, or great men, who aimed no further than this earth, and to have a portion in this world; and so are contradistinguished from the Godly, who, though they sojourn on the earth, yet do not dwell, nor have their conversation there, but in heaven. In which respect (*Iohn 17. 16.*) they are said not to be of the world, as the former, (*Psal. 17. 14.*) are described by this, that *they are men of this world, which have their portion in this life, &c.*

3. The motives, whereby this petition is prest expressly, are in these words, *How long, O Lord, holy, and true?* which we may take up in these three, two of them being from two essential Attributes of God, made use of here as most strengthening and encouraging to their Faith in this petition. The first, is from Gods holiness, *O Lord, holy, &c.* Lord, say they thou art holiness it self, and cannot but approve holiness in others, and disapprove wickedness where it is, seeing thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, *Hab. 1. 13. Psal. 11. 7.* Can it be then that our innocency and righteous cause shall suffer? and their violence and oppression go unpunished? There is reason from thy holiness to expect the contrary; and therefore we pray for it. The second Motive, is drawn from Gods faithfulness, *and true*: this respecteth God as he hath engaged him-

self in his Word, as if they said, Thou hast promised to own them that own Thee as we have done, and thou hast threatned judgment against them that wrong Thee and Thine, as these persecutors have done, and Thou art true in performing and executing what ever thou hast promised or threatned, therefore thou must avenge our blood upon them. Each of these grounds doth strongly by it self plead in this case, there being in them a twofold obligation (if we may say so) on God in reference to this end. His holiness swayeth him to maintain his peoples innocencie, and to reprove their enemies malice; his truth also engageth him to make out his promises to his people, and his threatnings to his enemies: but when these two go together, Gods *Holiness* and Gods *Truth*, in such a case there is inexpressible comfort to be drawn from them. There need no other midles to plead with God, but what is in God himself. His own Attributes, considered in themselves, and as flowing to us, and accessible to us by his truth, as he hath revealed them in his Promise and Covenant, do furnish all manner of consolation: And these two ought never to be separated in our pleading with God, 1. What he is in himself. 2. What he hath graciously engaged himself to be in his Word. The first, is the Fountain or Ocean, wherein what is needful to us, breedeth and aboundeth. The second, is the streams, whereby what is in him as the fountain, is communicated to us. The first giveth us ground to conceive largely of the fulness that is in him; the second (to wit, his Truth) giveth us access to approach unto him for partaking of it, seeing without this, God, considered in himself, would be terrible to us, as we are now in our sinful condition. And this is the reason why these two attributes are considered together in this place. The third motive, is in these words, *How long, Lord, &c.* which is not to express any complaint on God, or any unbelief in them (the titles they give God do clear both these) but the words, considered with these titles do enforce the suit, thus, Our sufferings have not been for a short time, but we have lyen long under them, and they are now come to an height, that almost we can bear no more: Therefore is thy holiness and faithfulness the more concerned to avenge us and not to permit us to suffer, and the enemy to triumph alway. So that as these words do imply the continuance and height of a sad condition, they do also plead pity and a favourable return exceedingly from God, who so sympathizes in his peoples straits; therefore is the word, *How long* used by the Saints, when they are, as it were, at an extremity here on earth.

The other thing that *John* heard, to wit, the return of this suit, followeth, *ver. 11.* fully consolatory; having these two things in it, serving to that scope. 1. Something is done unto them. 2. Something is said unto them. First, Before any thing be said unto them (for, God dealeth not by bare words with a praying people who are in strait) *white robes were given unto every one of them.* The thing given is, *white robes*, which (from *Chap. 3.* 4. they shall walk with me in white) is clear to be understood of heavenly Glory, souls being capable of no other raiment. It is said to be given them, not as if they had been at any time without it (all things here not being literally to be understood in the time more than in the thing that is given) but, to shew that Gods delaying of vengeance upon persecutors, doth not prejudice the present happiness of Martyrs souls, but that this delay is abundantly compensated by God who freely giveth them heavenly Glory, so that the other is no ground of complaint to them. This is the scope, as appeareth by what is said, *that they should rest for a little season, &c.* as if grace should give them the bud or bribe of Glory to satisfie them in the mean time. It is said, *robes were given to every one of them*, not as if all Martyrs had an equal share of Glory (though every one get a robe, yet there may be difference in robes)



But it is to shew, 1. That none is missed, whether their parts or place be great or small, high or low, Christ taketh notice of every one that suffereth, and rewardeth them. 2. It is to shew, that what ever be the measure that every one getteth, yet all get what is fitting to them or becoming them. Glory is shapen out to them, as cloaths are to men, every one according to their measure, as is fit; so that in heaven every one getteth their own coat (as it were) and the cloaths that are meetest for them, according to their stature in Christ, and each one may say their own measure becometh them better than the measure of one taller than they. In sum, it saith, all are contentedly happy, and none grumble at Gods way in disposing what is his own: although heavenly Glory be the thing mainly intended here, as the last judgement was the thing petitioned for in the former words; yet as in them we included temporal judgements in some respects, so here we may take in, under *white robes*, Gods owning and vindicating of the Martyrs that were dead, and servants that were living, from the many vile slanders and calumnies imputed to them, by which formerly they were made black, as is hinted at in the third seal: in which respect, now they may be said to be made white, because their innocency was manifested, and credit put upon them even before men: which in the event was fulfilled in the dayes of *Constantine* immediately thereafter: and often he hath given particular proofs of this, by vindicating in an extraordinary manner some of his eminent servants, who were not only overwhelmed with the reproaches of adulteries, murders, witchcraft, &c. but by malice stirring up false accusers, witnesses and Judges, were condemned judicially (or in hazard to be so) of such crimes, especially by the *Arrians* means, untill God, by terrour on the consciences of accusers and witnesses, or other extraordinary ways, brought truth to light, to the greater credit of his servants, as, in the case of *Eustachius* Bishop of *Nicomedia*, and *Athanasius* Bishop of *Alexandria*, with diverse others, wonderfully vindicated by God in their estimations before men, is clear.

The other part of the consolation, is contained in that which was said unto them, comprehending four Arguments of comfort to quiet them under the delay of Gods final judgement on the persecutors (beside what is already said) *It was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, untill their fellow-servants also, and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.*

The first and principal reason of the delay, may be thus conceived, Gods time of final judging is not come; He hath moe sufferers to permit, a certain number are enrolled for suffering as well as for heaven, many of which (especially these who are to suffer under Antichrist) have not yet obtained their crown, though these who cryed had obtained theirs: and therefore in respect of Gods purpose and decree, there is a necessity, that that suit of theirs should be suspended. This is the force of the reason, which goeth upon these grounds, as is hinted, 1. That there is a determinate roll of sufferers particularly condescended on by God. 2. That suffering hath in it a special dignity and honour unto the sufferers. It is a gift bestowed by God on some, and not on all; yea to some of these whom he loveth, and not to all, *Phil. 1. 29.* 3. That Gods purpose and decree must stand, nothing can alter that (known unto him are all his works from the beginning) and in time he hath no new counsel to take concerning any of these things. Therefore must that appointment, concerning the number of sufferers and manner and circumstance of their suffering, be fulfilled. 4. That all Gods decrees, even these which seem hardest to flesh (as this of suffering doth) are wisely and graciously levelled at his own Glory and the good of his People; and therefore ought, and may be quietly and contentedly submitted unto by them.

The particular motives which the Lord addeth to satisfy them to be quiet, (though his Sovereignty were enough) are these four, as is said, 1. That for the time their rest was not suspended untill the fulfilling of his purpose, but that good ground was given to them of acquiescing in the happiness bestowed on them; *They shall rest, &c.* 2. The time of that suspension was not long, but for a little season: therefore it might be the better borne: all the time of suffering, though seeming long to sufferers; yet, being compared with eternity, is but short and for a moment. 3. That little whiles suspension is not in vain, but for good ends: even then God is promoting his design of perfecting his Saints, and making ready for that final judgement upon his adversaries, and their cup is filling up for that end.

A fourth Argument, is, from the persons who are thus to be dignified with suffering: they are *brethren* and *fellow-servants*, Sons of that same Father, imployed in the service of that same Master with them; and therefore they, out of respect to them, might quietly wait for the fulfilling of Gods purpose of crowning them, and making them partake of the same dignity with themselves.

These reasons are expressed, not so much for the comforting of Saints in Heaven, as for the clearing, satisfying, and encouraging of Saints on earth against the continuance of sufferings, that they might patiently under them, wait for Gods final vindicating of them and judging of their enemies.

From this seal, we may gather, 1. That there hath been much sufferings of Gods people before this time; and therefore that the former seals, which implied sufferings, must be understood of the Churches sufferings, this cry, *How long, &c.* being brought in here as the result of these. 2. That these sufferings were such as proceeded from men, sinfully acting therein, by which they became liable to Gods vengeance, and were not to be understood of Famine, Pestilence, &c. or such judgements as do immediately flow from Gods hand. These could not have procured a cry of vengeance against the men of the earth, as is in this seal, if they had not been actors in these evils. 3. We may gather, that the Churches condition hath been generally suffering before this time, and that there hath not been any solemn and universal judgement on persecutors before this, the cry, *How long, O Lord, &c.* implyeth so much: and therefore, this seal, as it expresseth suffering, must relate unto the time of the Church before *Constantine*: at which time, God gave a visible testimony of his owning his Church, and of his indignation against persecutors, as we will see in the following seal. 4. It expresseth the Churches extremity, and that immediately going before her change from outward persecution to external peace; the vehemency of the cry, the comfortableness of the answer compared with the matter contained in the following seal, do confirm this, as if this were the very crisis and turn of that condition. 5. That the following seal is not to be looked on as a description of the day of Judgement, being that day, which is by this seal for a time suspended, doth not immediately succeed to Heathenish persecution: beside the reason given here of the suspension of that day, to wit, that all their enrolled number of Martyrs must be fulfilled, which in a great part is to be accomplished in the time of Antichrists tyranny, will confirm this, there being no possibility of including that persecution of Antichrist before the terrible events mentioned in the following seal.

In the opening of the words we have hinted at several doctrines, which now we shall not resume, but shall shortly point at these observations further,

1. That there is no sin that more effectually pleadeth for vengeance from God, or more certainly and severely shall be punished by him, than the sin of persecuting and wronging of the Saints. Wrongs done to any innocent men in the world

world have their cry before God, and God is the avenger of these; but wrongs done to His Saints, cry louder than the wrongs of any, even though Kings. God cannot (as it were) but hear and avenge, as is clear from the parable, *Luk. 18. 7.* And from experience this hath been found, that persecutors (even often in this life) have been remarkably plagued of God, as *Cain*, *Pharaoh*, *Babylon*, *Antiochus*, *Herod* the great, who was horribly plagued of God before his death; *Pontius Pilate*, who was degraded and banished; *Herod the Tetrarch*, miserably perished, *Act. 12.* *Nero*, *Domitian*, and many others, brought death upon themselves, as is clear from Scripture; *History of Josephus*, and the Ecclesiastick story, especially *Cent. Magd. De penis persecutorum*. It is true, Gods way in this, is soveraign and unsearchable in respect of the manner and time of this reckoning: sometimes He will suffer great persecutors to die in worldly credit and peace, as *Nebuchadnezzar* did, and in later times the Duke of *Alva*, the great persecuter in the Low-Countries: sometimes He will pardon the persecuter, as He did *Manasseh*; yet ordinarily doth He manifest His displeasure, even before the world, by temporal plagues of infamy and judgments upon them, or others, as may make the world know that He abhorreth that sin: Such was Gods thrusting *Nebuchadnezzar* for a time to the beasts of the field; such was Gods plaguing of *Manasseh* for his blood in his own imprisonment, and in denuding his children of the Kingdom. This proceedeth partly from the greatness of the sin of persecution, partly from the nature of it; God is more eminently and singularly engaged against it (He being in some manner persecuted in His people) So that we may say, that the blood of Martyrs soundeth alway with that word before God, with *Zechariah* the son of *Jehozada* expressed at his death, *2 Chron. 24. 22.* *The Lord look upon it, and require it.* This is the language of their blood; even then when their tongue may be praying with *Stephen*, *Act. 7. 60.* *Lord lay not this sin to their charge.*

*Obs. 2.* That Gods people may continue long under, and be brought unto great straits by persecution, as this cry importeth, and the opening of the former three seals maketh it appear. For until the days of *Constantine*, from the entry of the Gospel into the world, the Church for the space of 300. years and some odds was under persecution, and had little breathing time for these many years; Which is evident from story: wherein these two things are clear, 1. That during that time the Church was wasted by ten stated persecutions. The first by *Nero*, which began *Anno 67.* The second by *Domitian*, *Anno 90.* The third by *Trajan*, continuing (as is written) for 19. years, it began *Anno 100.* The fourth was under *Hadrian* and *Ant. Pius*, as is reckoned by some, and began *Anno 126.* The fifth by *Antoninus Philosophus*, and his Colleague *L. A. Verus*, beginning *Anno 168.* The sixth, was under *Severus*, which began in the year 208. The seventh, was under *Maximinus*, 236. The eighth, was under *Decius*, 251. The ninth, under *Gallus* and *Volusianus*, 258. The tenth, under *Dioclesian*, *Anno 300.* or thereabout. These persecutions are so reckoned by some, who account not that persecution of *Aurelianus* to be one: because his Edict was immediately recalled, he being terrified by God by a terrible thunder in the very instant of his subscribing the same: upon which, he afterward befriended Christians, so as he interposed his Authority for making effectual the sentence of the Synod of *Antioch* against *Sabellianus*. Others again who reckon this of *Aurelianus* one, omit that fourth under *Hadrian* and *Ant. Pius*, either because they account them one with that of *Trajan*, there being no considerable interruption betwixt them, or, because they were sooner stayed than others were. This maketh the difference amongst the Writers, who, to adhere to the number of Ten, are made to vary in the application of them; yet all agree in this general; that there were at least ten

distinct persecutions purposely raised against Christians, during that time: which being put together, will take up a considerable part of these 300. years.

A second thing clear from story, is, that even during the intervals of these persecutions, when the sword was not raging by Authority against Christians, yet by tumults and insurrections amongst the people, and by the malice of inferiour Governours (who were either actors in, or connivers at, or negligent of the punishing of such things) the Church was still suffering. In this manner was *Stephen* stoned by the people, *Act. 7.* *James* was beheaded, and *Peter* was imprisoned by *Herod*, *Act. 12.* This *Paul* and the Apostles often suffered in their journeyings, even before publick persecution was stirred by *Nero*, and thus it continued almost through all the Provinces of the Empire, when the Law seemed most favourable unto Christians, There being all that time no Emperour Christian to own Christians in their suffering, save one *Philippus*, who reigning but few years, was himself and his Family murdered by *Decius*, who raised the eighth persecution.

*Obs. 3.* That Gods people in a holy way may pray for vengeance upon persecutors, as is often used in the *Psalms*: not from self revenge, or from a carnal spirit; but from love to the glory of God, the vindicating of themselves and the truth maintained by them, and scaring of men from this sin of persecution, and the hazard that followeth upon it. *Obs. 4.* That God may suffer the blood of His Saints for a long time to be unpunished, as if He took no notice of their prayers in respect of the effect. *Obs. 5.* Even then when God seemeth to neglect His people, and to take no notice of their prayers, He is Holy and true, and is to be acknowledged so. Though sense would say the contrary, Faith ought to lay this ground at the entry, *Lord, thou art holy and true, &c.*

From the Answer, *vers. 11.* *Observe, 1.* That though God do not instantly grant the particulars that His people do pray for; yet their prayers are not lost: here the thing sought is delayed, yet a comfortable return of their prayers is made out unto them; and their prayers are not without fruit even for the time. *Obs. 2.* Gods peremptory decrees, and the prayers of His people, are not inconsistent; yea, His decree may aim at one thing, and the particular prayed-for by His people (as it is circumstantiated) aim at another thing, upon the matter, inconsistent with that; yet may these prayers be acceptable to God, and they in them, as is clear here and in *Abrahams* praying for the blessing to *Ishmael*, whiles God had appointed it for another. The reason, is, because our prayers and our practice are accepted, not because they are conformed to Gods secret will and decree, but as they agree with His revealed in His Word, which is the rule of our duty. *Obs. 3.* Though prayers prevail not to alter Gods decree; which must stand, yet prayers may procure much present quietness, and satisfaction for the time. Gods decrees are so wisely ordered for the good of His People, that it were no advantage, but prejudice to them to have them altered. *Obs. 4.* The most raging persecutions have their bounds set by God, the number of Martyrs is determined, and all the persecutors from the beginning of the World, to the end, shall not exceed in one person. Which, as it doth notably hold forth Gods Sovereignty and providence in the greatest confusion of the World; so doth it exceedingly contribute to the comfort of Gods people under them. *Obs. 5.* That the filling up of this roll, or the ending the sufferings of Gods people here on earth, and the coming of the great day of Judgement, come together. Or, The final Judgement of the World shall immediately follow the fulfilling of the sufferings of the Martyrs. The reason given of the suspension here, is, that their follow-servants, who were to be killed must be fulfilled: and the term that is set for the answering of their



prayer, to wit, until their fellow-servants, &c. doth confirm this. For there is no delay put to Judgment then, and there is no more to intervene the Martyrs perfecting, and this vengeance on the persecutors. These two are also joyned, Mat. 24. 29. The ending of the affliction of Gods people, and the

coming of Judgment; Immediately, saith the Lord, after the tribulation of these days shall the sun be darkened, &c. There is therefore no temporal peace, or millenary Kingdom, altogether free of suffering, to be expected before that time, which is the day of redemption from these sufferings.

## LECTURE VIII.

*Verf. 12. And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake, and the Sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the Moon became as blond,*

*13. And the Stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind.*

*14. And the heaven departed as a scrawl when it is rolled together, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places :*

*15. And the Kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains.*

*16. And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb :*

*17. For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand ?*

**W**E proceed now to the opening of the sixth seal, which holdeth forth some most terrible and dreadful dispensation, and that both in respect of the type and the word of explication or effects mentioned for opening of this type.

The type is set down, *vers. 12.* in three expressions, 1. *There was a great earthquake.* 2. *The Sun became black as sackcloth of hair.* 3. *The Moon became as blond.* The effects (which serve for explication of the former) follow, and are of two sorts, 1. Upon the reasonless creature, in three instances, 1. *The Stars fall from heaven, vers. 13.* 2. Upon the heavens, *they depart, &c. vers. 14. initio.* The third is upon the earth, *the mountains, (which are most stable in the continent) the islands (which are most remote in the sea) both are moved out of their place, Ibid.*

The second sort of effects, are upon reasonable men of all sorts, *Kings, great men, rich men, Captains, mighty men, bond men, and free men.* Great terrour is upon all these : which is two ways evidenced, 1. In what they did, *they hid themselves in the dens, &c. vers. 15.* 2. In what they said unto the mountains and rocks, *fall on us, and hide us, &c. vers. 16.* Lastly, the rise of all this terrour, and these dreadful effects, is more plainly expressed, to wit, the wrath of the Lamb, *for the great day of His wrath is come, vers. 17.*

In sum, the words point out this terrible dispensation, 1. That it is universal in respect of all creatures ; neither Sea, nor Land, Heaven nor Earth, nor men of any quality or condition are free, but all are sharers of the effects of it. 2. It holdeth forth terrour on all these in a most high and eminent measure and degree, as the effects do clear. 3. It pointeth at the special cause which hath influence on all these effects, to wit, the wrath of the Lamb, that is, of the Mediator, *because the day of his wrath is come, &c.* Which we conceive especially to be added for these reasons, First, To hold forth the special procuring cause of this judgment, which is not so much sins done

against God the Creator in the breaking of the Law, as against the grace of the Mediator offered in the Gospel : therefore is the wrath of the Lamb especially mentioned, as if he were in an eminent way avenging Himself against these who had vilified and contemptuously despised His Gospel, and the professors of it. Secondly, To shew some convincing appearing of Christ in this terrible change, so as it should be seen to be He by on-lookers, and that this acknowledgment should be extorted by that manifest appearance, even from these against whom He pleadeth this controversy. Thirdly, It sheweth the scope of all the former terrible effects that are mentioned in the type, to be the Lords executing judgment on the great men and others of the world (who put no price upon Him, but persecuted His servants) and that, so convincingly, as He might be seen in the pursuing of that His quarrel against them. Fourthly, It sheweth, Though Christs forbearance be long, yet hath He a time of reckoning, and cometh terribly when He cometh : and so this seal, wherein it is said, *the great day of the Lambs wrath is come, &c.* is to be looked upon in part, as the answer of the Saints prayer, *How long, O Lord, &c.* in the former seal : there, they long for His coming to Judgment ; here, it is marked, that that day of His wrath is come.

That some dreadful event is foretold here, is most manifest. The difficulty, is, how to apply in it particular. For understanding whereof, we premit these Considerations or Assertions, 1. It is usual to the Prophets to express great judgments (even such as are in temporal things) by such expressions, as, the overturning of Heaven and Earth, &c. It is also usual to John, to make use of the expressions which are used by them : particularly, we will find the same expressions in the Prophets that are here made use of in the threatening and foretelling of temporal judgments, as that in the type of the earthquake, the Suns darkening, and the Moons being turned into blond, may be gathered from Jer. 4. 23, 24, 28. Joel 2. 10. *The earth shall quake before them, the heaven shall tremble, the Sun and the Moon shall be dark, and the Stars shall withdraw their shining*

ing. Hag. 2. 21, 22. *I will shake the Heavens and the Earth, saith the Lord, which in plain terms followeth, I will overthrow the throne of Kingdoms, and will destroy the strength of the Kingdoms of the heathens.* In a word, it is to foretell a remarkable ruine upon the enemies of His Church. Adde *Isai. 13. 9, 10. Behold, the day of the Lord cometh with fierce anger and wrath, &c. For the Stars of heaven shall not give their light; and the Sun shall be darkened, and the Moon shall not cause here light to shine.* So also, (*Ezek. 32. 7.*) *I will cover the Sun with a cloud, and the Moon shall not give her light, &c.* In all which places, the Prophets, after their manner, are aggreging temporal judgments by such expressions.

Again, the first sort of effects, of the Stars falling from their place, of the mountains, and islands their moving, are, upon the matter, the same with, *Isa. 34. 1. The Lord maketh the earth empty, and turneth it upside down, &c.* with *vers. 3. and 4.* with *Jerem. 4. 24. Psal. 18. 7. Habak. 3. 6, &c.*

The other sort of effects, are the same, *i. e.* expressions of terror, used, *Isa. 2. 19. They shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, &c.* The other part of those effects we will find, *Hos. 10. 8. They shall say to the mountains cover us, and to the hills, fall on us, &c.* which words are by our Lord (*Luk. 23. 30.*) applied to set out the terrible nature of Gods judgment upon the Jews, which was to come a little after at the destruction of Jerusalem. From which places, put together, it will appear not inconsistent with this description and expressions thereof, to apply this event to some temporal judgement. For confirming whereof further, we may,

2. Consider, that this event cannot be understood principally, and primarily of the day of Judgement; but must be understood of something going before that. It is true, the completing of vengeance (to speak so) will be then at its height: and, by proportion, we may gather from the terrible expressions used to hold forth Gods wrath in a temporal judgement, the unconceivable dreadful nature of the last day, which will be exceedingly beyond the most terrible temporal event. Yet, we conceive, the scope of this place, is not to hold forth that day; but some particular judgement, wherein Gods wrath against the enemies of Christs Kingdom, is in a singular and extraordinary way manifested. For, 1. The seventh seal is yet to be opened, which containeth events in time posterior to the sixth, as was shewen, *Leff. 1.* on this Chapter. 2. No mention hath hitherto been made of Antichrist, either of his rise, reign, or ruine: and it will not be consistent with that immediate dependence, which each of the former seals hath one upon another, to say, that this sixth seal leapeth from the Heathenish persecution over many hundreds of years, and all the intervening events till the day of Judgement. 3. The matter contained in it, is only terror against Christs enemies, who are enemies to Him as Mediator: which cannot be said of the day of Judgement, which is as comfortable to His friends as terrible to His enemies and all sorts of wicked men. It agreeth therefore better to some particular judgement, than to that general appearance. 4. If this were the day of Judgement principally longed-for by the Saints in the former seal, Then there needed not have been so many Arguments to presse quietness during the suspension of that suit, if it were so instantly and immediately fulfilled. 5. It is not like, that the day of Judgement should be prophesied of and described before any temporal judgement on enemies be heard of, especially seeing they are spoken of in this same prophesie. But concerning this, see more in the first and seventh Lectures on this Chapter.

3. We say, This event prophesied of here, cannot be understood as containing sad things to the Church, but on the enemies and persecutors thereof: which is clear, 1. by the former consideration; compared with the persons on whom this judge-

ment falleth: it is on Kings, Captains, and great Men of the earth. Now, during the Heathenish persecution under the former seals, unto which this immediately succeedeth; there were no such persons in the Church as these. 2. This is confirmed by the terror accompanying this judgement, which maketh them in their practice flee from Christ, and in their words cry out against it, as being to be reckoned with against their wills, and as apprehending certainly wrath to themselves from His appearing, as in the parallel places, *Hos. 10. 8. Luk. 23. 30.* is evident. All which, agreeth not with the Saints frame of Spirit, especially under affliction, who are crying, *How long, O Lord,* as under the former seal; and are described by this, that they love Christs appearing, and are joyful of it, as of the day of their Redemption. 3. Persecution on the Church, could breed no such terror on the Kings of the earth, as is here prophesied of.

4. We say, this type cannot hold forth defection in Church-men, as if that were typified by Stars falling from Heaven, darkening of the Sun, &c. For, darkening of light, or defection of Church-men could not breed such terror on the Kings and great Men of the earth as is here: they are not usually much troubled with these things: and yet it is clear, that this terror floweth as an effect from this sad judgement typified and expressed by these former expressions. And therefore by the same reason, this seal is not to be divided, as if by the first part thereof were holden out defection in the Church, and by the last, judgement upon enemies, seeing this last part doth clearly hold forth the effects of the former, and doth more fully explicate the same thing.

5. We do also assert, that here cannot be understood any trouble brought upon persecutors by Heathens, nor any trouble brought upon the Empire while Emperours and Rulers were Christians by these who were Heathens, such as that of the Goths, and these inundations of barbarous Nations, which after the four hundred year brake in upon the Empire. For, 1. the series of time will not agree to that: this seal followeth immediately the Churches sufferings by Heathen Emperours; and therefore it is not like the great mutation on the Empire, when it became Christian, should be omitted. 2. This judgement speaketh out especially the wrath of Christ, and that so palpably, as His hand is in a more singular way acknowledged in it, than the prevailing of Heathens against Heathens would readily produce. This conviction (as would seem) of Christs being acknowledged in it, flowing mainly from the instruments employed, and owned by Him in the execution of it; and this terror that falleth on them, is not that terror as it seafeth on all the wicked in the general judgement, such as was mentioned, *Chap. 1. 7.* nor that which affecteth men simply by the dread of Gods greatness, as He is in Himself; but it is two ways qualified. 1. It is the terror of Him that sitteth on the Throne, that is, of God, as He ruleth in His Church: in which respect, He is holden forth, *Chap. 4. v. 5.* and so distinguished from the Mediator: so now, by this judgment on enemies for persecuting His Church, He maketh them know that He ruleth and hath a Throne particularly in Jacob to the ends of the earth, as the Saints Prayer is, *Psal. 59. 13.* 2. It is the wrath of the Lamb, appearing as Mediator, and befriending His Church, which the more surpriseth them, that formerly they despised both: now, they find them both in their tops, owning the despised Church and making it known that their Idols which they worshipped, had not the absolute and sovereign government of affairs, but the God whom the Christians worshipped. 3. This judgment falleth especially, and in a peculiar way upon the enemies of Christ, as the expressions bear; But, judgments, executed by Heathens (particularly and especially these brought on by the Goths, Vandals, &c.) lay as heavy (if not more heavy) upon the soundest and best Christians as upon any other.



4. The mutation brought on by this judgement, is so universal upon all things, and so suddain, being contained under one seal, that it can hardly be paralleled by any particular event of such an invasion: and therefore is not to be applied to them,

Upon these grounds it is, why we conceive this seal to differ from the first four, in these two, 1. The type is not a *horse* and a *rider*. 1. Because the object is not the same. These first four concern the Church immediately, this concerneth its enemies. 2. Because though the Lord ordereth judgements upon the most wicked men by His providence; yet this type holdeth forth judgement in a more boundlesse way without such limitations and restrictions as the former dispensations towards the Church (typified by *horse* and *riders* with their several commissions) did admit. 2. In this seal, there is no word of advertisement to *come and see*, as was in the former four. The reason is, because God sendeth not Ministers unto, nor alloweth warnings upon His enemies as He doth upon His people. To conclude then, we say, this seal relateth not, first, to the end of the world. Nor, 2. to the persecution of the Church under Antichrist. And, 3. nor to the invasion of the Empire by *Goths, Vandals, &c.* and other Heathen Nations: these invasions were not stated palpably on Christs account, as manifestly owning His interest, such as this seal importeth. It remaineth then to be understood of some singular and extraordinary change on the *Romane* Empire, and its Heathen Emperours, whereby it becometh quite another thing, persecution put to an end, persecuters brought unto judgement, and that by such instruments, as maintained Christs quarrel against them, and with such success as should extort the acknowledgement thereof from the persecuters themselves. All which characters, as they are now clearly implied in this seal; so will we find them remarkably fulfilled in that great change of the world in the dayes of *Constantine* the great, about the year 310. and afterwards; which came commediately upon the back of the last persecution, (and so agreeth well to the time) by which the whole face of the Heathenish Empire was changed, and, as Heathenish, was overturned. So that in effect the world became another thing than it was: which agreeth well with the type; persecuters were visibly punished and taken with their hands hot in the bloud of the Saints; and by such instruments as particularly stated the quarrel upon Christs account, and therefore carried the crosse in their Ensign; many Emperours and great Men, were brought to acknowledge Christs hand and indignation against them; The Church had freedom from outward persecutions; Christianity became in request in the world, so that Christians seemed now to enjoy in part the return of the prayers of these that had gone before them. All which, being so evidently fulfilled in that time, and being so agreeable to this type in all its circumstances, we conceive, that the foretelling of this very event, is the main scope of this seal: for clearing and confirming whereof, we shall adde further these considerations,

If we consider, 1. the usual manner of the Prophets their expressing of horrible judgments (as we observed at the entry) it will be agreeable to them, and to *John* who followeth them, to understand this of some temporal thing, especially upon enemies.

2. Consider, that it is ordinary in the Scriptures of the New Testament, and agreeable to this prophesie to speak of the *Romane* Empire as of all the world, and of things befalling it, as of changes and events befalling all the world; So, *Luke* 21. It is said that *Augustus* decreed, that all the world should be taxed, that is, all the Empire, *Rev.* 3. 10. And therefore it will not be unreasonable to ascribe these expressions to changes within this Empire.

3. Consider, that the change of Religion in the Empire in its

Nature, Ordinances, Customs, Cermonies, &c. and the bringing in of a different Religion in its room, is ordinarily expressed in such terms as hold forth an universal change upon all the world; upon Heaven, Earth, Sun, Moon, Seas, &c. as if all were overturned, and yet the change is not upon the world in it self, but upon Religion (if we may speak so) in the world: because that change hath such alterations with it, as if the world became another thing; and because Religion being the most precious thing in the world, the great and remarkable changes are reckoned accordingly as it goeth with it. Hence we will find three eminent changes and periods in respect of Religion, spoken of in this Book, and all of them in such expressions as bear forth, at the first view, a total and universal change upon all the world. The first, is, the change of the world from Heathenish Idolatry to Christianity: this change is set out as a new world in this seal; because (as it were) that Heathenish world, wherein Heathens bare rule, and Idolatry was publicly countenanced and authorized, is overturned, and another world come in its room. This change of the world is from Heathenish to Christian. The second great change of Religion, is from the simplicity of Christianity, unto the darknesse and doctrines of Antichrist. This change under the trumpets, is set forth by smiting of the Earth and Seas, by darkening of the Sun and Moon, &c. when the mutation is upon the state of Religion in the world; This change is of a Christian world into an Antichristian. The third great change, is under the vials, when Antichrists kingdom again is brought down, *Chap.* 16. It is expressed by a mutation upon the Earth, Sea, Sun, &c. when yet the judgment falleth but on the beast his worshippers, and the pendicles, and superstitions of his kingdom, which may be called the Antichristian world: and this mutation, is the overturning of the Antichristian, and the inbringing of a Christian world again in the place of it. And this way being kept in expressing all the other changes of Religion in the world, we may the more warrantably apply this here, as is said. Only, there is this difference, the other changes of Religion under the trumpets and vials, are brought about by steps under several trumpets and vials; This change is set out by one seal together, because that alteration was instantly, and universally at one time brought to passe, which in the other change is not so sudden.

4. The considering of that event, more particularly in its several circumstances, doth so fully answer this type, that it may well be taken in and accounted as a universal change upon the world. Which will appear by considering these two in the matter of fact, 1. What the state of the Church was immediately before this change. 2. Considering what the state of the Church became immediately thereafter.

1. The state of the Church before *Constantine's* government, was, for outward persecution, under the extreamest sufferings that can be imagined, as was hinted at in the expounding of the fourth seal. Amongst the four chief Governours that then were, to wit, *Dioclesian*, *Maximianus Hercules*, *Galerius Maximinus* (called also *Jovius*) and *Constantius*, *Constantine's* father, only this last had a favour to Christians, the other three being most cruel persecuters. About *Constantius* death, started up *Maxentius* to usurp the Empire at Rome, who for a time prevailed, and continued as barbarous and cruel as any of the other. Against this *Maxentius*, *Jovius* sent one *Severus* (whom he called *Cesar*) who was overthrown by him; after whom, he preferred one *Maximinus* his nephew, who in persecuting was nothing behind any of the former. A little after *Licinius*, who was constituted *Cesar* in his room (who for a time had counterfeited befriended Christians for fear of *Constantine*) yet afterward fell into most grosse blasphemie and persecution. All of these having this for their aime, to root out Christianity, by cruelty and subtilty, left nothing undone to accomplish it. Their cruelty

vented in these Persecutions; and their subtilty may be gathered from the Laws we find enacted against the Church in these times. As, 1. that all the Bibles, Cups, and Church-furniture should be delivered up and destroyed: it was from this giving up of the Bible, that Christians, who made defection, were called after that *Traditores*, that delivering up their Bibles, &c. being accounted receding from the truth, or the testimony thereof. 2. That men and women should not meet together for religious exercises, but men apart, and women apart. 3. That none should teach women, but women. 4. That no meetings should be kept within the circuits of Towns, but in the fields, upon the pretext of healthfulness. 5. That there should be no meetings of Ministers or correspondences amongst them in Synods or otherways, which was prohibited as a thing dangerous to the State. 6. That all the old Temples should be built, and all the meeting-places of the Christians destroyed. 7. That no Ministers should be permitted, but, where ever found, they should be cast into Prison: Which Laws, at last, ended in open Persecution against all that professed the Name of Christ; so that to be called a Christian, was a most horrid crime. Unto these Laws, afterward *Julian* (who was eminently taught of the devil to undermine Christianity after it had flourished for a time in peace and tranquillity) added these four; or, more plainly and craftily formed them out of what was before him. 1. That no Christian should be admitted to any Trust, Civil or Military, but he who first sacrificed to Idols: this was observed formerly under *Dioclesian*. 2. That the children of no Christian should be admitted to Schools of Learning, or be educated in humane Science, that by that means he might bring in ignorance amongst the Christians, that they might be the less able to vindicate Christianity, and might be the less thought-of amongst others. 3. That no Preacher of the Gospel amongst them should have any allowance of maintenance (for, before him in *Constantine's* time they had allowance settled by Publick Authority) intending thereby to overturn the Church, knowing that the Church cannot consist without the Ministry, neither a Ministry without it be maintained. His fourth device to undo Christianity, was, in despite of it, to give way to all other Religions by publick tolerating of them, Therefore in his time was the rebuilding of the Temple of *Apollon* at *Delfus* intended, and the *Jews* encouraged to lay the foundation of their destroyed Temple at *Jerusalem*: both which were miraculously by earth-quakes impeded: and his practices in reference to this, were observed, (*Chap. 2.*) in the Epistle to *Thyatira*.

From which particulars, with what was said in opening the fourth seal, it may appear, how sad the condition of the Christian Church was when *Constantine* began to govern. Let us now see what it became within some few years thereafter.

The estate which the Church was brought unto after that time, was shortly thus. After *Constantine's* death, *Constantine* being declared Emperour while he was in *Britain*, continued in these parts for a time, while the forementioned Persecutors, especially *Maxentius* who lived at *Rome*, were become hateful to all; not so much for their persecuting of Christians, as by their tyrannies, adulteries, and all sort of vile cruelties upon every sort of persons: Whereupon, *Constantine* (called *Χλωρος* from his colour) was encouraged to march toward *Rome*, having before him, as his end, the liberating of the Emperie from such tyranny of so many Tyrants: and being doubtful what Religion to follow, at the noon-day, or a little after, there appeared to him in the Heavens, a fiery cross, with this Inscription in legible Letters (*ὅς τὸν νῦν, ἰ. e. in hoc vince*) in this overcome. This vision was seen by many others with him, as *Socrates*, (*Lib. 1. cap. 1.*) affirmeth: by which sign, he was not only animated to go to *Rome*, while he was hesitating; but also to embrace Christianity and the profession of

Christ. In sign whereof he always carried the Cross with that Inscription for his Colours, and set it up at *Rome*, when he entered Victor in it. This story, *Euseb. de vita Constantini, lib. 1. cap. 22.* affirmeth he heard *Constantine* himself assert to be truth with an oath. after this, he with his Army marched toward *Rome*, and in the way had discovered to him the treachery of *Maximinianus* his own Father in Law: By Gods mercy he was delivered from it, and it returned upon the Author. When he came to *Rome*, God delivered the Tyrant *Maxentius* into his hand. *Maxentius* and his chief Officers being put to flight on the other side of the River *Tyber*, was necessitated to return by a Bridge (*per pontem Milvium* as they call it) whereupon he had made devices in a secret way to have drowned *Constantine*, by which, he and these that were with him were drowned in the River. Upon which occasion (as *Eusebius* reporteth, *lib. 9. cap. 8.*) Christians took occasion to sing that word in the 9. Psalm, *vers. 16. The Lord is known by the judgments which he executeth, the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.* And that word, *Psal. 7. 15. He made a pit and digged it, and he himself is fallen into it, &c.* After this, *Constantine* having the peaceable possession of the West, had afterward two difficulties; The first, from *Maximinus*, aiming to drive on persecution, and the death of *Constantine* together, *Euseb. lib. 1. de vita Constantini, cap. 40.* The second was from *Licinius* Emperour of the East, with whom *Constantine* had made Peace, and had given his Sister to him in Marriage, who for a time did counterfelt Christianity; yet within five years, became a most cruel enemy to *Constantine* and all other Christians, and was the author of many of the former cruel Edicts, as is to be seen in the former places of *Eusebius, lib. 1. cap. 43, 44, 45, 46, &c.* Against these also *Constantine* set himself, not only by Arms, but by Prayer to God and Fasting: over whom God gave him glorious victories, as is to be seen, *Ibid. lib. 1. cap. 51. lib. 2. cap. 11, 12, 13, 14, &c.* After which, followed a most comfortable and joyful estate of the Church, as *Euseb. hath it, lib. 2. cap. 19.* Out of which general, we may gather and observe these particulars, for making out the answerableness of this event unto this type, and the greatness of the change from what was before.

As, 1. This judgement was upon many great men, as *Dioclesian, Maximianus, Galerius, Maximinus, Maxentius, Licinius*: all which had the titles of Emperours or *Cæsars*, beside what came on many great Captains under them, as particularly on *Pontetius, Cilianus, Theotimus* and many others, remarkably plagued of God, as is evident in the forecited stories.

2. Christianity that was before destroyed, was now publickly by Authority countenanced; Idolatry that was before countenanced, is now abhorred by all; Idol-temples every where are destroyed or shut up, and Christian Churches built and Ministers provided, rather more sumptuously than sparingly, as we may gather from *Euseb. lib. 3. cap. 47, 49, 52, 53, 56, &c.*

3. The Laws are just contrary to what they were; none but Christians are admitted to Office: and though *Constantine* took not the way of discovering his servants, which his Father *Constantine* did (who gave out, as *Jehu*, that he would admit of none to serve him, but such as sacrificed to Idols, but afterward expelled the sacrificers, and kepted the refusers, saying, they would not be faithful to him, who had never been faithful to God) yet was he zealous in having faithful men about him, and to have Religious Worship not only in publick, but particularly in his own Family: Schools were appointed, Ministers encouraged; Martyres (or Confessors rather) who were in exile, were brought back: these who had been put from Offices, were restored; Synods were convocate and countenanced by *Constantine's* own Presence, as that of *Nice*; Heresies were condemned; toleration of other Religions, or of schisms,



Julianus, amongst Christians, was not suffered, and many such like Laws and practices, just opposite to what was before.

4. Consider the great Victories He obtained over enemies, and the account upon which he pursued them. His first War against *Maxentius*, was undertaken as particularly called unto it by Christ Himself; his last War against *Licinius*, was not occasioned out of any temporal design to advance his own greatness; (for he was desirous to live peaceably with him) but, to restrain his persecution by force, when all other fair means attempted by him, had been frustrated, God giving many singular evidences of His owning him in these Victories.

5. Consider the time when these Persecutors were surprised, it was even in the time of their actual opposition to Christ, whilst professedly they had stated Persecution against His Servants, and could by no means be withdrawn from it, but went on contemptuously blaspheming the Name of the Lord Jesus (whom they called *Novitius* in opposition to the old plurality of Gods whom they worshipped).

6. Consider the remarkableness of Gods judgements upon these Persecutors, and the terrible effects both in deed and word which they produced in them; not only to the conviction of others, but also to the convincing of themselves, that Christ was their party, Such terror of conscience seising on them as was palpable before the world. *Dioclesian*, and *Maximianus Hercules* in the midst of their greatness and heat of persecution, both in one day dejected themselves of the imperial dignity, choosing rather to live (as it were) in the caves and dens of the earth, than to continue in their authority; a thing unheard of before in the world. This party proceeded from displeasure that they attained not their design in destroying Christianity, but rather found it to grow under them; partly from terror of conscience, arising from that, as if they had gathered clearly that they were contending with God in that. Thereafter both of them put violent hands in themselves, *Dioclesian*, being sent for by *Constantine* upon suppletion, choosed rather to poison himself than to see him. *Maximianus Hercules* endeavouring again to recover his authority, was discovered in his design by his daughter *Constantine's* wife; he was pursued, and besieged by him, and was either killed, or, during the siege hanged himself, as is diversly reported by writers. The third, *Maxentius*, was remarkably drowned, as is said before, with many of his chief officers, which made the Christians compare his destruction in the water with *Pharaoh's* drowning in the red Sea. *Maximianus Jovius*, through intemperance becoming corpulent, was smitten with byles in the secret parts, out of which issued abundance of vermine, in a most loathsome disease, so that Physicians were either suffocated by his smell, or were killed by him, because they could not cure him, one of his Physicians telling him, it was Gods judgement on him for persecution, which no man could remove. At last, the conviction was so born in upon himself, that he acknowledged his wrongs done to the Church, to be the cause of that Plague; and therefore being stricken with terror, gave out Edicts that the Persecution should cease, Churches should be builded, and that in their meetings, prayers should be put up for him, as formerly used to be. Which Edict, is to be found in *Eusebius*, lib. 8. cap. 18, 19. where the end also of *Dioclesian* and *Hercules* is set down. The other Tyrant in the East (to wit, *Maximianus*, who was called *Cesar*) had been industrious to invent tortures for Christians, especially to pull out their eyes, was at last defeat, and in a base habit made to hide himself, and thereafter pursued by sickness, which made both his eyes to leap out; by which, he was necessitated to confess, that only the God of Christians was God; and that he had been mistaken concerning the gods whom he choose to worship: all which he had found to be truth by experience it self. Which words were uttered by him, being even expiring, as *Eusebius* testifi-

eth, *de vita Constantini*, lib. 2. cap. 32. *Licinius* again, who could not be scarred from Persecution by any of these examples (though in some thereof himself had been actor, whilst he was in confederacy with *Constantine*) was after many defeats and flights convinced of his folly, and made to vent his indignation against these Idolatrous Priests who had made him disdain *Constantine's* God, and put confidence in the multitude of old gods, as they called them. So that he and his chief associates being taken, and brought to punishment by *Constantine*, were made to understand how great and admirable the God of *Constantine* was, *de vita Constant. lib. 2. cap. 18.* Which remarkable judgements, and confessions; as also of many other great men, their adherents, as if they were speaking out the words contained in the Text, ye will find in the forecited History, and in *Cent. Magd. de penis persecutorum.*

The like remarkable judgements, with such confessions we will not find at any time together in any story. All which considerations being put together, we conceive the reasons now more apparent why we applied the seal to this event and expounded it of it, seeing every thing jumps so in the time, event and effects, as hath been formerly hinted at.

We conceive it not needful to insist particularly in expounding and applying every expression, as what the darkening of the Sun, the removing of Islands and Mountains meaneth, or how they differ among themselves. This is certain, that all the parts of that Idolatrous World are comprehended under this threatening, and all sorts of Persecutors are to be included in this stroke, that there are none so great or strong, as may liberate themselves from it; and that there is nothing so stately, firm or remote, which shall escape this change. But this alteration shall be extended over all, so as the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. If it be asked, why this particular temporal judgement is set out under such high and universal terms, as seemeth more agreeable to the day of Judgement? *Ans.* Beside the custome of the Prophets, and constant strain of this Book, we say, 1. The ill was universal, and the remedy was very broad and wonderful, which made the change be of the larger extent. 2. It was a very great change from one extremum of suffering to another extremum of outward prosperity. 3. It was a very sudden change, few years intervened between the Churches low condition, and her outward flourishing estate; all which, looketh like a new World. Men could hardly have believed in so short time to have seen such things, had it not been by the extraordinary power of God carried on (as it were) like the day of Judgement on the one side, and like a new Creation on the other. 4. This event may in some sort be a type and resemblance of the last Judgement, and an evidence and pledge of it unto the Saints who were praying for that vengeance; and therefore may be thought to be set forth under such expressions, for confirming Gods praying People, in the hope of that day.

We may from this scope take these Observations; 1. That though the great vengeance of God against Persecutors, be reserved till the last day of Judgement; yet sometimes, yea, often God will remarkably punish them, even before men, as is clear in the application before mentioned, and in the Observations on the former seal. We will scarcely find in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, or in Story, any eminent Persecutor, for the most part, to go out of this World without some remarkable blot. The sin of shedding the blood of Gods people, is spoken of in the case of *Manasseh*, 2 King 24. 4. as a sin which God would not pardon, as to temporal afflictions, though He pardon it to the penitent, as to its eternal punishment. If we can look through the actors in these ten persecutions, this will be clear. *Nero*, being hated of men and pursued by the Senate, killed himself; *Domitian*, having drawn a Catalogue of such as he was to kill, in which was the name of his own wife,

and other friends, they having found it, put him to death; Trajan was continually vexed with seditions, and after fell into an extraordinary disease, by which he was taken away; Adrian, being vexed with commotions in his life, died with much anxiety, as these verses expressed by him, before his death do manifest,

*Animula, vagula, blandula, Pallidula, rigida, nudula,  
Hospes, comesque corporis, Nec, ut soles, dabis jocos.  
Qua nunc abibis in loca?*

Maximinus being declared an enemy by the Senate, was killed in his tent; Decius, by the Goths (in their first invasion of the Empire) with his whole Armie, was cut off; Valerianus was overcome by the Persians, and made use of by Sapor as a rest for his foot when he was to horse; of Dioclesian we have heard already. Thus, for the most part, were the persecutors dealt with by God, and died ignominiously, and oftentimes with terror and regrave. Such a word had Severus at his death, *Omnia fui, & nihil mihi prodest*; such also was the end of that infamous enemy of Christians, Julian, who, in his height of contempt against Christ, was deadly wounded in battel against the Persians, and throwing his blood in the Air, died with that desperate expression in his mouth, *viciisti tandem Galilae*; Valentinus the Emperour, being a great favourer of the Arrians, and a great persecuter of the Orthodoxe, (as the Arrians did exceed the Heathens in cruelty) was in battel against the Goths in Thracia wounded, and being carried to some house near by, it was set on fire by the enemy, in which he miserably perished. All which do shew Gods revengeful justice in pursuing that sin.

Obs. 2. Wrath is exceeding terrible upon the stoutest men of the world. What a terribleness must there be in the great day when wrath and terror (to speak so) are at their perfection? and what a howling and crying must that be, when all the families of the earth, and these that have pierced Him, shall mourn before Him? It were good to prevent this terror, and to abstain from what provoketh it. This will be found a certain truth, that it is a fearful thing to fall in the hands of the living God. Obs. 3. The great distance that is between God and creatures, and how far all of them are in His reverence, He can at one instance shake both Heaven and Earth, and turn the world upside down; He can make the Kings to flee, and the stoutest men in the world to cry out for fear; He, even He, only is to be feared; and who can stand when He is angry? Psal. 76. 7. It is a wonder poor men will live under a controversy with Him, and be so little affrighted of His wrath. 4. There is nothing maketh wrath more insufferable, than that it is the wrath of the Lamb Christ, v. 16. This is added as that which augmenteth their terror and maketh their case desperate, when the Mediator is their enemy, there is none in heaven nor earth, that can befriend them; The vengeance of despised Grace, executed by the Mediator, is the most dreadful vengeance. The Lord save us from that. Obs. 5. The fickleness of all creatures, even of the most mighty and valiant men in the world; What are they when God beginneth to reckon with them? Stars fall from heaven, great men and stout men hide themselves from the Lamb. It may learn us to cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for, wherein is he to be accounted of? 6. See the insufferableness of wrath, the day of His wrath is come, and who can abide Him? what meaneth the great part of men who hazard without fear upon known causes of wrath and can live at ease with God? There is a necessity of being at peace with Him; this wrath of His, one day will be found unsupportable. Obs. 7. Judgements oftentimes fall forest

upon the great ones of the world; and these that in mens account might be thought most secure, Kings, great Men and mighty Men, are especially stricken at; partly, because they use to be ring-leaders in the sin; partly, it serveth most to the abasing of creatures and the manifesting of Gods Justice and Power; partly, (to speak so) they think more strange of it. 8. The stoutest men be in their opposition to Christ, and the more secure and confident they be in their sin, oftentimes, when wrath cometh, they are found the more desperate cowards. Because, the more security be under sin, the more force and power is added unto the challenge of the conscience when it is weakened. There is a great odds here between the language of these gallants who now cannot abide the face of the Lamb, and the former braggings wherein often they have defied the Son of God. 9. There is no condition so hard, that the proudest men in the world will decline, nay, by the contrary, they will desire it, that they may escape the wrath of God, when once the sense of it breaketh in upon them. Some gallants stand now upon their points and credit, and will not flee where there credit is concerned, though it should draw on sin upon them; but there will be no such sticking in the day of wrath; men will be glad to flee to the basest corner of the earth, they would choose that the greatest mountain or rock should fall upon them, and think no shame to cry for it: yea, annihilation would be welcome to them, to prevent their appearing before Jesus Christ: Men, great Men, and stout Men, will have a far other language (if we may suppose it) at their appearing before Him, than now in their grandour it were possible for them to imagine. Obs. 10. When God reckoneth, He needeth neither witness nor tormenter; He hath both these in the consciences of His most desperate enemies. What an awband is it that God hath over all men in respect of their consciences? which being armed by God against them, would be worse to encounter with than thousands of Armies? This maketh men flee when none persueth. 11. No King, nor great one in the world, upon any entreaty, will be exempted from judgment, but appear they must, even though they cannot abide it. What a torture must it be to be distracted between these two, A necessity of appearing, and an utter impossibility to endure that appearing? Certainly if men were to live and speak after some experience of these things, they might be supposed to become much wiser in the ordering of themselves, or at least in giving their advice to others, than they were before, as the rich Glutton (Luke 16.) giveth advertisement to his brethren out of hell. 12. There is a day coming when there will be no trying; when the Lamb cometh in wrath to reckon with despisers, He persueth in wrath, and they would fain flee; but there is no treating aimed at on either side. 13. This day of wrath is certainly coming and will come, though it seem to be delayed. We may well take all the instances of particular judgments as pledges of that day. Men will once find they have wronged themselves, that they have so little believed this great Article of Faith. 14. When that day cometh, there will be great odds between Gods people, and the rest of the world. The Kings and great ones, who despised them on earth, would be glad in that day to exchange Thrones with the meanest Saint, and will never attain it. Wrath when it cometh, will make the world know of what worth Godliness is, and what an excellent thing it is to have a good conscience, and what advantage there is in having peace made with God through Christ Jesus. These are the true and faithful sayings of God, and who believeth them not now, will one day with the rich Glutton find the truth of them.



## LECTURE I.

## C H A P. VII.

Verf. 1. **A**Nd after these things, I saw four Angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.



**A**T the entry of the former Chapter we divided this prophesie into three principal prophesies, holding forth and relating unto three principal periods of the condition of the Militant Church. The first, relating to the Churches sufferings under Heathens, which was expressed by the seals, whereof we have spoken. The second, concerning Antichrists rise and dominion, holden forth by the trumpets. The third, concerning the Churches outgate from under that storm, is contained under the vials. These two are yet to come. And because that second was a sad storm, which might shake the Faith of Gods People, if they were not strengthened against it, The Lord armeth them in reference thereunto by laying down these two strong consolations, 1. By shewing His care of His Church in providing for the safety of His own before the storm should come. 2. By shewing the certainty of the Churches outgate from, and victory over that strait. Which two take up the Chapter, and are put together in a little view and hint, before the Lord go on to describe the storm itself, that thereby the faith of Gods people, and their consolation in reference thereto, might be the more strengthened and confirmed.

If we look to the order of revealing the matter contained in this Chapter, it doth belong to the sixth seal (the seventh not being yet opened;) But, if we look unto the matter it self, and the scope, we will find it belong to the prophesies following as preparatory to them, & set down before the opening of the seventh seal, To make the transition from the one prophesie to the other the more discernable; and also to make the prophesie coming the more to be adverted unto, and the easier to be understood.

The Chapter then hath these two parts, 1. The Lords taking care of His Church and Elect before the coming of a storm; by separating of them, and (as it were, by His own seal) setting them apart from others, that they should not be hurt by it. And because these prophesies represent the events to John, as acted; therefore is this care of Gods also represented to him in that same manner before these events come. This first, is from the beginning to the ninth *vers*; and the second part, from the ninth *vers* to the end, holdeth forth a calm and flourishing estate of the Church after that storm, in respect of number, beauty, and freedom in the serving of God: which relateth, First, unto the Church on earth, and in part foresheweth the spreading of the Gospel, after Antichrists tyranny and domination hath brought the Church low; but especially is to be fulfilled in Heaven, where these things, which in a propheticall manner are spoken of, and applied unto the Church here, will more properly be fulfilled.

For clearing of this scope, and better understanding of this Chapter, let us consider these three, 1. What these winds do signifie. 2. What is meant by this sealing. 3. Unto what time or state of the Church they do relate.

By *winds*, three things are especially understood in Scripture, which make the holding of these winds 3 ways to be interpreted.

1. By *winds*, in Scripture, are understood temporal judgements on civil States, *Jer.* 49. 36, &c. and so the *holding* of

*winds* supposeth a restraint on temporal troubles, keeping them for a time, from breaking loose upon the Church, though they were ready even then to blow. The event is thus applied, The Church had outward peace for a little time under *Constantine*, and after; but immediately the Empire was overrun by *Goths* and *Vandals*, *Saracens* & other barbarous Nations, who had been a little time restrained, that the Church might have some breathing,

2. By *winds*, sometimes in Scripture are understood the blowings of the Spirit, especially accompanying the Ordinances, in keeping them clean and making them effectual. These Gospel-ordinances, and breathings of the Spirit with them, being as necessary for keeping the Church uncorrupted, as winds are to the air which we breath in. See *Act.* 2. 12. *Cant.* 4. 16. *Ezek.* 37. 4. According to this acception of winds, the *holding* of them doth signifie the restraining of the pure Doctrine of the Gospel, whereby followed the spreading of heresie, and the rising of Antichrist, who (say they) was working even in *Constantine's* time.

3. By *winds*, the Scripture sometimes holdeth forth spiritual judgements, as heresie in Doctrine, Schisms, Divisions, Contentions, &c. which have upon the Church an impetuous force and violence like winds, driving unstable souls from their steadfastness, as the word is, *Eph.* 4. 14. *That we be not children tossed to and fro by every wind of Doctrine by the sleight of men, &c.* It is so taken also, *Jud.* 12. in respect of these who (*verse* 11.) had followed the gain-saying of *Core*; they are said to be carried about of winds, &c. Thus the *holding* of these winds is to be conceived. I saw (saith *John*) immediately after the Churches freedom from persecution, a new storm of heresie and schism ready to set upon the Church and to carry all away before it: but it was bounded and restrained by Gods power, till He had established His Elect against it, so as it shall have no force to overturn them.

We conceive the last to be especially aimed at here, and that these *winds* do hold forth the growing and encreasing of false Doctrine and Schism in the Church, rather than any of the former two. 1. Because this agreeth best to the scope, which is to guard the Elect from these evils. Now, in the strain of this Book we will not find the Elect saved from temporal evils more than others: it must therefore be understood of spiritual judgements, and that in a high degree; from which only they (to wit the Elect) have a peculiar exemption, *Mat.* 24. 24. 2. This exemption doth specially relate unto these evils of Antichrist whereof the world partaketh, and from which only the elect are kept clean, as will appear from *cap.* 13. 8. & *Cap.* 14. v. 1, 4. These sealed ones are said not to be defiled; by which we may gather what is the judgements they are to be kept from, to wit, spiritual defilement, seing purity from these is peculiar to the sealed ones as a fruit of their sealing. Again, we understand the form of this spiritual judgement (to speak so) to consist rather in the actual blowings of error, than in the privative restraint of pure Doctrine; because the effects mentioned of hurting Trees, Earth, Sea, &c. are the effects of winds actually blowing and bringing hurt unto these things. Beside, the holding of these *winds* being for that end, till the Elect should be marked, evidenceth that the judgement is in letting loose these winds, the holding whereof, is a restraint upon them.

To

To the second question, to wit, What is to be understood by this seal, or sealing, mentioned? We say, 1. That it is not any visible or discernable character, as to men, which is intended. But 2. some separating and differencing thing, whereby, as to the effect, these who are separated are distinguished from others that are not separated. In a word, the scope is to shew, that every one of Gods own shall be as certainly kept free from the hurt of that storm, as if there were a visible marke put upon every one of them. This manner of speech, is borrowed, 1. From Kings that seal with their own Seal what they would not have touched. 2. From the story, *Exod. 12.13.* where God, being to separate Israel from the Egyptians in respect of the plague of smiting the first-born, did first separate them by a mark (as it were) upon the posts of their doors, whereby His care of them was signified, and their faith of immunity from that plague strengthened; and accordingly the effect followed, none that were marked were hurt; so shall it be here. 3. It may look unto *Ezek. 9.* where a story of sealing some, not unlike to this, is recorded. In sum, it is to show the security of the Elect under that storm: Which we conceive especially to flow from these two, 1. From Gods decree of Election. 2. Gods care and providence in the executing of His decree of Election, so as the saddest trial is limited in its commission in respect of the Elect, and they are looked unto and sustained under it. This agreeth well with *Mat. 24.24.* where preservation from error is derived from Gods Election: and that which is called *sealing* here, we take it to be the same which is expressed (*Chap. 13. and 8.*) by *writing in the Lambs book of life* mentioned there for the same scope as this is here. It agreeth also with *2 Tim. 2. 19.* where the Lords foundation (which is His Election) is said to be sealed, because of the surenesse and unalterablenesse thereof.

The third thing to be cleared, is, what time or state of the Church this relateth unto? *Ans.* Although doctrinally the words do in general hold forth Christs care of His Church and People in reference unto these trials which are common to them with others, and so this may be applied to all times, Christ had a care of His Church under the seals, and a peculiar care of His own under every trial; this is a truth: but, considering the words as they point at some particular time, and for that end are set down in this prophesie, We conceive, that they hold forth Gods peculiar oversight of His Elect, in keeping them from the storm which is threatened by the trumpets, and not from the temporal strokes contained under the same, and so doth belong to the following prophesie and not to the preceeding, 1. Because the seals hold forth especially temporal judgements, the trumpets hold forth spiritual plagues. Now, the Elect not being exempted from the former, but from the latter, This prophesie then (to call it so) of peculiar exemption, must belong to the trumpets which contain judgements of a Spiritual nature. 2. If we look to *Chap. 9.4.* (which comprehendeth the prophesie of the first wo brought upon the world by the fifth trumpet) there these who are sealed, are peculiarly exempted from that wo. The inserting therefore that limitation in the commission of that wo, that it should not hurt these who had the seal of God, doth evidently knit this sealing unto that trumpet, as peculiarly belonging to it and intended for that storm. 3. We find (*Chap. 13. 8.*) only the Elect excepted from the worshipping of the beast; and (*Chap. 14.1.4.*) we find the same number, who are said to be sealed here, observed to be kept clean, according as was designed here, these places shewing the effect of Gods sealing here to have been answerable in the event, that as He had sealed them to be kept clean, so were they by vertue thereof actually preserved. Now, that preservation, in respect of the event in these places, doth manifestly look to their being kept free of Antichrists corruptions, which contemporateth with the trumpets; and therefore this sealing, which holdeth forth Gods purpose of bringing about that event, must belong to that time also.

The scope then is shortly this, John being commissioned, to reveal the second great storm, which was to come upon the Church by the breaking out of Heresie, and rising of Antichrist to a height, by which many moe of the Visible Church should be carried away than under the former persecutions, so that in effect, the whole world should wonder after the beast, and the Elect be in great hazard, lest the Lords people should faint, as if there were no Church during that time; the Lord comforteth them by shewing the security of the Elect, and immutability of Election in the most declining times; and that He would preserve them from being carried away, or hurt, by that storm, as if they were by some visible Character distinguished from the rest of the world for that end.

To come more particularly to this first part of the Chapter, There are two things represented in it, 1. A sad judgement to the Church; this is implied, *vers. 1.* 2. Christs care in preparing for, and guarding His Church from it.

In the first we have these four things to consider, 1. Wherein this judgement or trial consisteth. 2. The instruments intrusted with the oversight thereof are set down. 3. Their Postour is described. 4. The object of this judgement is pointed at.

1. The trial is in the blowing of winds, even four winds; by which we understand Spiritual dangers of Heresies, Divisions, Schisms, &c. as is before said: which are compared to winds, 1. To shew the violence and force of Error, which impetuously carrieth many away with it; therefore it is compared to a flood, *Chap. 12.* and is called *strong delusion*, *2 Thes. 2.* which place relateth to the same event. 2. They are compared to winds, to shew the effects of Error amongst unstable souls, which drive them from former received Truths to Error, and from one Error to another to and fro, even as winds toss any light matter; therefore (*Jud. 12.*) they that are given to Error, are said to be carried about of winds, as Clouds or Weather-cocks are from one side to another according as the wind bloweth.

3. Again, they are called four winds, to shew, 1. The plurality of Errors which come one with another and one after another, when once these winds begin to blow. 2. To shew the opposition of one Errour to another, and the inconsistency of them together, as well as with truth. In this, Errour differeth from ordinary winds; these blow but from one airt at once but this setteth upon all corners together, the devil aiming to break in upon one side when he is repelled at another, and to catch one by one Errour, who hath not been taken with an other.

2. The instruments are described, *I saw four Angels standing, &c.* 1. They are called Angels. And, 2. four Angels. We need not dispute much whether they be good or bad, seeing God who is the Creator and Sovereign of both, may and often hath made use of either of them in executing of His judgements upon the wicked world: it would seem these mentioned here, are good Angels, 1. Because for a time they restrained these winds, ready before this to have broken out, but were kept up as in prison by them, till Christ should give orders. It is true the winds are from evil spirits, and prime Ministers of Satan; but the holding of these winds, and the timing of the blowing of them, so as might further Gods design most, are good, and seem to be acts of Christs Kingly Office, executed by good Angels, who have that committed to them for the Churches sake: and therefore, it may be said of them, that power was given them to hurt the earth, because that cannot come to passe but by their leave who have the oversight of that deluge of Errour entrusted to them. 2. The Angel who speaketh to them, taketh them in as joynt servants of God with him, and as employed in the same work, as it is, *vers. 3.* which maketh it appear to be Elect Angels, employed in that



work for the good of Elect Saints. They are called *four*; because there were four winds, and there being hazard from so many airths, God will have his care and Sovereignty seen in having one Angel for every danger.

3. We are to consider their posture; which is set down, *First*. In their *standing on the four corners of the earth*: which importeth two things, 1. The imminency of the judgement, it was ready to break in on all corners. 2. It sheweth the vigilancy and activeness of these instruments in executing what was committed to them, with a readiness to advert to Christs orders and to obey them. Secondly, As they are *standing*, so they are *holding the four winds of the earth*, which confirmeth what is formerly said; and beside, implyeth a degree of force in the winds, and of activity in the instruments, forcibly (as it were) holding them. Thirdly, The end why they hold the winds is, *that the winds should not blow on the earth*: which is not simply to restrain them from hurting the earth, but for a time, untill the Elect should be prepared and provided for it, as the verses following will clear.

The fourth thing in the Verse, is, the object on which these winds do blow; it is implied in this verse to be the Earth, the Sea, and Trees; for, the restraining of these winds from blowing on them for a time, supposeth them to be the object of that storm, as is clearly expressed, *v. 2, 3. It was given to them to hurt the earth, &c.* These three are most ordinarily obnoxious to the hurt of winds, and therefore are mentioned here. The earth lyeth open to winds, being plagued by earthquakes, overthrowing of houses, spoiling of corns, fruits, &c. the sea being so liquid and unstable, is subject to tossings, and risings, whereby shipwrack and other inconveniencies follow. 3. Trees are more subject than other things, because of their height, which maketh them the more obnoxious unto, and the less able to bear with the impetuous force of the stormie winds, whereby some are rent, others are overblown, &c. The scope is, to shew, that as the wind seafeth on these things, as the proper object of its hurt, so error hath its own object, upon which the hurt thereof will be no less effectual.

More particularly, by Earth, &c. here cannot be understood these without the Church, (error not being a plague wherewith such are scourged) but we must understand Professors of the visible Church, because the event (which followeth by the trumpets) is made good on them; and therefore this Earth, is not distinguished from the visible Church by any external profession, but from the invisible Church, in respect of secret Election, as from what preceedeth is clear.

That these three, *Earth, sea, and trees*, are mentioned together, as the objects hurt by this storm, may be done in allusion to three sorts of Professors, over whom error especially prevaieth.

1. The earthly-minded professour, who supposeth gain to be Godliness, lyeth open to this storm, when set upon by a temptation to error, which is backed with worldly wealth, ease, credit, preferment, &c. Of such the Scripture in many places speaketh, who, upon that account, have been ensnared with this bait, *Phil. 3. 19. 2 Pet. 2. 15. Jud. 11.* And upon this account it is, that, *1 Tim. 6. 10. the love of money, is called the root of all evil, which while some covet after, they have erred from the faith.*

2. By *Sea*, may be signified unsettled light professors, who like *Reuben*, are unstable like water, and fixed in nothing; therefore are they (*Jude 13.*) called *raging waves of the sea, and wandring stars*; and clouds that are carried with a tempest, *2 Pet. 2. 17.* a light professor is an easie prey to Error.

3. By *Trees* may be understood professors, who, in respect of profession, gifts of knowledge, utterance, &c. may be said to be high above others, and no less high in their own conceit, being by knowledge puffed up, though in respect of true fruits

exceeding barren; for, if these that are real Christians be compared to trees, indeed bearing fruit: (which sort of Christians, *Chap. 9. ver. 4.* are exempted from this judgement.) Christians, who are but in profession so, yet much in their own conceit, may be called trees, as they are by *Jude ver. 12.* and *2 Pet. 2.* they are called presumptuous, as high above others in their own conceit; which sort of Professors, are as obnoxious to error as any other.

The sum of this Verse, is, No sooner was the Church freed from open persecution, but the devil stirreth up errors of all sorts, and that with great violence; whereby, in Gods righteous judgement, many secure earthly-minded, unstable and proud conceit professors were to be carried away; yet were they for a time restrained by Gods power, till, &c. From which, Observe,

1. That Error and Heresie waiteth upon the Churches outward prosperous condition; and no sooner is she freed from open persecution, but as soon the devil waiteth on to sow these tares. *Chapter 12.* when the childe is delivered from persecution, the devil, the serpent, speweth out a flood after her: it was so in *Constantin's* time, unto which this relateth: the Church was scarcely landed from that sea of persecution, when the heresie of *Arius* and other divisions, set vehemently upon the Church, as we will see in opening of the trumpets. It was so in the time of the Gospels breaking forth again in *Germany*; floods of *Anabaptists, Libertines, Antinomians, &c.* followed it, and somewhat of it hath been made out in our own experience in this island. The devil who is a murderer and a liar from the beginning, waiteth all opportunities to destroy, if so he may gain by Error what he could not attain by violence. Beside, men usually, then becoming more secure, and falling asleep, he hath the fairer occasion to sow his tares, which he doth not neglect. 2. Error and Heresie, is one of these plagues whereof God maketh use in His Justice to punish the ingrate world who have had the Gospel in peace and have abused it. Therefore when delusion cometh in its greatest height, as *2 Thessa. 2. 10.* or, a false prophet cometh to speak lies in the name of the Lord, *Deut. 13. 1, 3.* They are both said to be sent of him as a just reward of rejecting the truth. 3. The abounding of Error is a sore plague: and therefore Toleration (which we conceive to be no other thing, upon the matter, but the letting loose of these winds) must be a sad stroak to many professors; by this, they are tossed, snared, and made drunk with a fill of their own wayes, and many carried headlong to the ruine of their souls. By this, the best things of the Church, to wit, its truth, purity, unity, &c. are blasted. Have not *Arianisme, Pelagianisme, Popery*, and other Errors wronged the Church more than many years Famine, Wars, and Pestilence, and destroyed more souls than these have done bodies? It is a wonder the world should think so light of so heavy a plague. 4. When Error cometh as judgement, it cometh exceedingly fitted and strengthened for carrying on its point. There is a deluge or flood of them together; therefore it is called *strong delusion*, and a *spirit of error*, *2 Thess. 2. 11.* because, as it hath from God a Commission, and cannot be quiet till that be executed, more than the bloody sword can be, *Ezek. 21.* so it is armed suitably for that end, sometimes with variety of errors, sometimes with the number of followers, sometimes with countenance from great ones of the world and temporal advantages, sometimes with eminency of gifts, in the Authors and Abettors thereof: these, or such like, going alongst with the temptation, make it set on the more strongly and with the greater difficulty to be resisted. 5. There are some Errors that are inconsistent together, and opposite one to another, wherewith yet in Gods secret justice, the devil may be permitted to assault and trouble the Church: the Lord thereby aimeth the more to further the trial of the sincere and discovery

of the counterfeit; the devil thereby aimeth to undo all by prevailing against them upon one side or another, that if one error do not take, he may essay about to find out that which is suitable to their humour, and to set on them where he shall find them weakest. At least by these diversities of Errours, he maketh the truth the more disputable unto the men of the world. In the primitive times, some denied Christ to be true Man, as *Apollinaris*; others denied him to be true God, as *Ebion*, *Arius*, *Photinus*, &c. These again differing among themselves, *Arius* calling him God, but a created God in time; *Photinus* and his followers, asserting him to be but meer man; some made him to consist of two Persons as well as two Natures, others running to the other extreme to shun that, affirmed him to have but one nature as he is but one person, This was the Heresie of *Eutyches*, the former was spread by *Nestorius*; *Sabellians* made but one person, as there is but one God, as the *Antitrinitarians* do now. Those called *Tritheists*, made three Gods as well as three Persons. *Augustine de heresi*. 66. nameth some whom he calleth *Coluthiani*, whose Errour was, that no evil was from God, even these evils whereby he punished profane men, He nameth also some whom he calleth *Floriani*, attributing all evil, even that which was sinful, to God. In the matter of discipline, some were too rigid, as the *Novatians* and

*Donatists*, &c. admitting no penitents to Church-fellowship who had once given offence, though they granted they might receive pardon from God. Others again, running to the other extreme, did too soon, without any evidences of a change, re-admit the scandalous, not only to Church-communion, but also to have trust and bear Office in the Church, the rise of this is attributed to one *Felicissimus*, by *Baronius*, Anno 235. pag. 481. The like might be instanced in many Errours, as by comparing the Errour of Papists, upon the one hand, giving too much to works, and *Antinomians*, upon the other hand, giving too little; betwixt Prelacy, monopolizing Government in the person of one Bishop, and Independency, bestowing it indifferently upon all the members of the Church, and in many such cases. These are enough to clear the truth of the thing, and to make Believers watchful, and to put on the whole Armour of God, lest, what one temptation upon one side doth not, another may. 6. Considering this storme to accompany the Churches outward peace. Observe, That oftentimes the purity of Doctrine suffereth most in the Churches outward prosperous condition, sometimes by the devils sleight, sometimes by the security of the Church her self becoming secure or proud under her external peace.

## LECTURE II.

Verf. 2. *And I saw another Angel ascending from the East, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four Angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,*

3. *Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.*

**W**E have had some little view of that sad condition which the Church was to be into by the storm of heresie from all airts blowing upon her: which storm, we conceive, foretelleth the rising of the *Antichristian*, *Macedonian*, and other Heresies, but especially the rise and growth of Antichrist and the Churches defection under him, 1. Because these winds did immediately set upon the Church after her freedom from open persecution, and so falleth in the very same time unto which this prophesie belongeth. 2. Because the event, being compared with the prophesie, will be found exceedingly agreeable to it; yea, the scope of this, being to shew the next great trial of the Church after the close of open persecution, it must be understood of these foresaid Errors and defection, which are the second mean used by the devil to undo the Church. 3. What we said in the former Lecture, clearing the scope of this prophesie to be Gods guarding of his People against that storm which cometh by the trumpets and beast, Chap. 8, 9, and 13. doth also confirm this, that the storm here principally meant, is that defection under Antichrist, seeing this seal is particularly to guard against it, which cometh with power and lying wonders, 2 *Thess.* 2.

We come now to consider the consolation which the Lord giveth unto his people, to guard and comfort them against that storm. It hath two parts, as is said. The first sheweth Gods care of them before the storm come; the second expresseth their happy outgate from it. The first is from the second verse unto the ninth; and the second from the ninth verse unto the close of the Chapter.

The first consolation, is described in these four, 1. The instrument of it. 2. His going about it according to his commission. 3. The persons whom this consolation concerneth. Lastly, The event is observed to be answerable to what was intended, all being sealed who were designed to be exempted by God.

1. The instrument, ver. 2. he is called another Angel, &c. He is described in three, 1. That he is an Angel. 2. *Ascending from the east.* 3. From his office or trust, that he had the seal of the living God. 2. By Angel, we understand no created Angel but Christ Jesus the Angel of the Covenant, called *Michael*, Chap. 12. For, 1. It is Christ who chiefly taketh part with the Elect, and provideth so that none can pluck his sheep out of his hand; and with his Angels (Chap. 12.) fighteth against the Dragon and his. 2. Because the keeping of the seal of the living God (as great Lord-keeper or Chancellor under him) belongeth only to the Mediator. 3. In the words following, He crieth authoritatively, and giveth order to the other Angels who were overseers of the judgement; by which it appeareth to be some eminent Angel unto whom these properties do agree, which is none other but Jesus Christ, though he may have other Angels employed under Him, as it is, Chap. 12.

2. He is said to ascend from the east: either alluding unto Christs names of *Sun*, *Light*, *Star*, *morning*, &c. shewing that as all light cometh from the east, so all comfort cometh by Christ, who seasonably and refreshfully manifesteth his care of his Church, as the rising of the Sun after darkness: in which respect (*Mat.* 24, 27.) Christs coming is spoken of as lightning from the east, or it may be in allusion to that entry of the Temple upon



upon the east, by which only the Prince was to ascend, *Ezek. 44. 2, 3.* whereby may be signified who this is who thus cometh into His Church in a sovereign, princely way.

3. He is said *to have the seal of the living God*; to shew His immediate trust under Him, (the keeper of the seal among men being next unto the King) whereby he hath absolute power to exempt from trials or not; which is, upon the matter, equivalent to that of His having the keys of the house of David committed unto Him.

2. His manner of executing His Office, or Trust, is expressed in these three, 1. In that He is said *to cry with a loud voice unto the four Angels, &c.* By which is holden forth, 1. His Authority in commanding. 2. The imminency of the hazard that made Him cry to have it prevented. 3. Carefulness in Him to have it for a time restrained. The second thing in the execution, is, the parties to whom He cryeth, that is, to the *four Angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea.* By which we may gather, 1. That the Commission of these Angels, was not principally to restrain judgment, but to execute it. 2. That there is a power and Authority derived from God, even in these judgments whereby the earth is hurt. 3. That Angels are subject to our blessed Lord Jesus, not only in receiving of their Commission, but in the execution of it; they cannot act but by orders from Him. 4. That He cryeth first to them and to all of them, sheweth both His care of His People, when they are not minding their own hazard, He is providing for them; and also His wisdom, in taking the right way in manifesting of it.

3. There is the matter of His cry, *vers. 3.* saying, *hurt not the earth, &c. till we have sealed, &c.* Which words hold forth, 1. Christ's great design in His coming and suspending this judgment, it is the safety of His People. 2. We may see His peremptoriness in ordering all things in reference to that end. This judgment is not simply discharged; for, afterward it may hurt the earth, but it is so bounded and ordered, and that peremptorily, as not to blow or hurt till Gods People be provided for it, and that they may be kept from the hurt of it, The restriction *until, &c.* beareth out this.

3. The objects about which this care is taken, are *the servants of our God*, so called, not as all creatures are, nor as some special Ministers are, but as such who by special compact and agreement have given up, and Covenanted themselves to be so, and in their conversations carry suitably to that engagement. Thus all *Israel*, especially true *Israel*, are called the Lords servants, *Levit. 25. 55.* in opposition to Idolaters who worshipped other gods; and thus, true servants, are described by this, that they desired to fear His name, *Neh. 1. 11.* In opposition to hypocrites, who say, and do not. In sum, by *servants* are understood such, as adhere to God in a declining time, and do not enslave themselves to Antichrist with the rest of the world, as it is *Chap. 13.* He saith, *of our God*, because Christ, as Mediator and Head of the Body, standeth in a joyned relation to God with His People, as it is, *Joh. 20. 17. my God, and your God, &c.* which is a special consolation unto them, and marked here as a special privilege.

4. The effect of the execution of His Commission, is marked, *vers. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.* wherein His faithfulness in sealing of the Elect, is set down, 1. generally in the number it self and of whom they were, *vers. 4.* 2. More particularly, they are distributed in the Verses following. The scope of all which, is, to shew, 1. The exactness of this Angels performing of what was intrusted to Him. 2. That none missed who were in His roll. 3. To shew that it was the very persons designed of God, and therefore they are marked here and there of several tribes, and not indistinctly together. That circumstance, *vers. 4. and I heard the number of them that were sealed,* is added to shew the certainty of Johns record, he being, as it were, an ear

witness thereunto. That we may more particularly take up the meaning of this, we are to enquire, 1. What is meant by *Israel*, out of whom these are said to be marked. 2. What is meant by the particular distribution of them in so many Tribes, and so many thousands of every Tribe. By *Israel* and the Tribes thereof, sometimes in Scripture are understood the Israelites who were come of *Jacob* according to the flesh; this is the most proper and usual meaning. Sometimes again, by *Israel* is understood the Church of God under the Gospel, who profess the faith of *Abraham*, of what ever Nation and People they be of, as *Gal. 3. 29.* and *6. 16, &c.* called *Israel*, 1. Because they are a spiritual seed to *Abraham*, who is the father of all them that believe. 2. Because they are admitted to the same essential privileges and promises which the Israelites once had, *Rom. 11. 17, 24.* they are ingrafted in the same olive-tree; and now in Christ *Jesus* there is neither *Jew* nor *Gentile*. 3. It is frequent to set forth the worship of the New Testament under the names of that which belongeth to the Old, and to stile the Gospel-church by the name of *Jerusalem* which is above; and therefore it is agreeable to this, that the professors of the New Testament should pass under the title of *Israel*, especially in this prophesie, in which the old titles are so frequently applied unto the new state of the Church. We conceive, the last, to wit, the spiritual seed of *Abraham*, or the Gospel-church, to be meant here by the Tribes of *Israel*, and not *Jews* by nature only, And that beside the former general reasons, upon these three considerations,

1. Such are understood by *Israel* here, as were to be kept free from Antichrists pollution: Now, these are not only *Jews*, but mainly *Gentiles*, as the event, and time, to which it is applicable, doth evince. 2. If by this sealed number of a 144000. we are to understand all these, who during Antichrists tyranny shall be kept free of his pollutions, and if they are to be contradistinguished from the plurality of the Church who wandereth and goeth a whoring after the beast, Then they cannot understand them to be *Jews* only, but the pure part of the Church of whatsoever Nation they be: But the former is clear, to wit, that by these are to be understood all the pure part of the Church, as contradistinguished from Antichrists followers, as will appear, 1. By comparing the end of their sealing here with *Chap. 9. vers. 4. & 13. vers. 8.* for, they that are sealed here, are the servants of our God, to wit, all who adhere to Him. 2. The end of their sealing, is, to keep them from that defection whereinto all others not sealed, are involved, as the effect cleareth. 3. These that are passed by, are left open to this storm, and carried away with it, Therefore this sealing must take in all the Elect during that time, of whatsoever Nation they be, seeing no Elect can be understood to be unsealed, and so left open to this storm, as is clear, *Chap. 9. 4.* They must therefore be understood under the name of *Israel* who are thus sealed: 2. It will further appear by comparing this with *Chap. 14. 1, 2, 3, 4.* where these 144000. are particularly mentioned as the Virgin-church, distinguished from the adulterous world, and that at the turn of Antichrists dominion, as if it were particularly recorded, that notwithstanding of Antichrist's tyranny and the worlds defection with him, yet all whom God had appointed to life, were kept from that defection, And therefore this number must comprehend all such (being a definite for an indefinite) who during his tyranny should be kept free; and therefore it is not to be ascribed unto the natural *Jews*. 3. The distinguishing of *Jews* here from that innumerable company (*ver. 9.*) of all Nations, doth clear this; For, they are distinguished, not in respect of Nation or Kindred, as if by each of them were set forth some part of the Gospel-church contemporary one with the other, but in respect of diverse successive states of the Church, belonging to diverse times, as that however

however the Gospel-church immediately after the Christian Religion shall obtain liberty and authority, shall be brought unto great straits, and reduced to a few number (as Gods Church was in the days of the Old Testament) yet, it shall afterward break forth and flourish among all Nations, so that the Church in the latter days shall be as far extended for number and diversity of people beyond what the Church shall be under Antichrist, as the Gospel-Church was at its first spreading, extended beyond the Church of the *Jews*: And therefore the whole pure Professors of the Church, during this storm, being comprehended under these that are sealed out of the several Tribes, It cannot be ascribed unto the natural *Jews*.

That this comparison and opposition of *Jews* with *Gentiles*, or the smaller number with the greater, doth belong to several states of the Church, will appear by this, that these sealed ones are living in the time of a storm and great tribulation, and whileas pure Profession, and Professors of Jesus Christ, are exceeding rare, as the scope here, and the places formerly cited, Chap. 9. 13, 14. do clear. That Innumerable company again, are remarkable for their number, and are said to have come out of great tribulation (as if now the storm were past) as Victors and Conquerours having Palms in their hands. This innumerable company therefore must denote a following out-gate of the former storm; and so by each of them, some condition of the whole Gospel-church, and not of *Jews* or *Gentiles* severally, is typified.

The second thing to be cleared, is, wherefore the number is so peremptorily determined, and particularly distributed in several Tribes? *Ans.* 1. By what is said, it may be seen, that this definite number is indefinitely to be understood, not as if they were just so many in all, or in every Tribe alike. But, 2. For these reasons, 1. To shew that they were particularly determined By God and known to Him. 2. That though the defection was universal and great; yet there should be a considerable number reserved, as was of 7000, in *Elias* days. That yet in comparison of the whole world that was to follow the beast, that number was to be very small, as it is said in *Isaiah*, *Though the number of Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet but a remnant shall be saved.*

More particularly, this number is proportioned amongst the Tribes, to shew, 1. that God not only numbereth them in gross and in common together, but hath the very particular and individual persons, who are constituent of that number, marked and determined (to say so) both *numero numerante* & *numero numerato*. 2. To shew Gods sovereignty and good pleasure, in choosing some of every Kindred and Tribe, and His care in providing for them whom he hath chosen, of whatsoever Tribe they be.

*Obser.* 1. That Error oftentimes bringeth the Church; yea, the Saints, into the greatest hazards. What maketh Christ cry so, and maketh all this business; It is to mark the Elect, which supposeth them to be in great hazard: yea, that, (*Mat. 24. 24.*) *if it were possible, the very elect should be deceived*, sheweth it cometh near the march, even as near as possible; yea, often there is more fear and hazard to the Elect, their Spiritual estate by Error, than there is by persecutions; yea, by gross sins and tentations to them, as murder, adultery, &c. and moe are taken off their feet by the one than by the other, because it cometh under some pretext of Holiness and Piety; in which respect it is said, *the devil, in this temptation, transformeth himself in an angel of light*, 2 *Cor. 11.* Believers had need

to be watchful against all evils, but in a special manner against this; it is no little difficulty, in a corrupt time, to stand it out. *Obs.* 2. The greater the danger be, Christ hath the greater care. This maketh Him cry and come down, whereas no such particular act of His is marked when the Church was suffering; Chap. 6. He had rather keep them from sin than suffering; yea, often Error hurteth more than suffering doth. More particularly *Observe*,

1. Christ is great Overseer of what concerneth His People; none can hurt, but as He giveth orders; all that execute judgement, are in a dependency on Him: which is a great consolation to His People. 2. He is never so angry at an ungrate world as to forget one Elect; in the midst of this storm, He remembreth them. So had God respect to one *Noah* in the old World, and to one *Lot* in *Sodom*; they could do nothing who were to execute that judgement, till he were set free. 3. God hath some Elect, and a Church under the greatest defection, even seven thousand when *Elias* thinketh there is not one, which should make us wary in censuring times and places to be altogether ungodly. 4. No Elect shall be finally seduced; that is not possible, *Matth. 24.* 5. That impossibility of final seduction dependeth not on themselves, but on Gods decree and care in sealing them and preserving them from it, which maketh it true alway, *Rom. 11. 7.* *the election hath obtained*, and none but they, *for the rest were blinded.* 6. If it be asked, why these sealed ones, who are the Elect, are called Servants of our God? I answer, It is a description of the Elect from their Holiness; a fruit and effect of their Election; and to clear it, there is a twofold seal, 2 *Tim. 2. 19.* one known to God, *He knoweth who are His* by decree. The other is the fruit and evidence of the former, and in these come to age, never separated, *Let them who name the Lord depart from iniquity.* In this last respect, they are called servants of God, for these reasons, which are so many grounds of Doctrine.

1. That wherever election is, there is, or will be, holiness and obedience, as a fruit of it; holiness and obedience is a proof of Election as to men, or to ones own conscience; they are of equal extent. Hence (*Eph. 1. 4.*) we are Elected to be holy: let not these things that God conjoyneth be separated. 2. None but these who are servants to God in some real manner, can promise to themselves any benefit of Election, or freedom from any plague, and especially from this plague: *Ezek. 9.* these are marked only who were mourning for the abominations of the rest, and keeping themselves free. Losing a good conscience maketh shipwreck of the Faith, 1 *Tim. 1. 19.* Let none plead for any benefit of Election whatsoever without this. 3. All that in some measure honour and obey God, are kept from evil, and may promise to themselves immunity, as far as is requisite, when others cannot; 2 *Tim. 2. 21.* *If a man purge himself from these things, he shall be a vessel of honour, reserved for the Masters use.* 4. Holiness hath many advantages; it is the best guard against Errors, to receive the truth in love: it hath often an outward protection, as in *Lot*, *Noah*, &c. *Psal. 34.* *The Angels pitch their tents about them.* *Obs.* 5. Christ and we have but one God, *John 20. 17.* *I ascend to your Father, and my Father; and to my God, and your God.* Lastly, God hath still a care of His Servants. The sum of all is this, If Christs care be much worth to souls, and it be advantage to have it, Be stirred up to holiness as ye would be sure of it; and, as ye would be kept free from the sins and judgements of the time, and have peace in yourselves, Be servants of our God, and give up your selves to Him.



## LECTURE III.

Verf. 4. *And I heard the number of them which were sealed : and there were sealed an hundred and fourty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.*

5. *Of the tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.*

6. *Of the trike of Afer were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthaly were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.*

7. *Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.*

8. *Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.*

**T**He fourth Verse containeth the particular number of these that were sealed, a certain number in both the reckonings for an uncertain. The scope of it is the more effectually to bear out the consolation for strengthening the Faith of Gods People by such a particular numeration. 1. It is summed, *vers. 4.* whereof is spoken before. 2. It is distributed amongst the Tribes, *vers. 5, 6, 7, 8.*

The scope of the distribution, beside what is said, is by continuing the manner of speech, used under the Old Testament, of *Israel*, Tribes, *Jerusalem*, &c. to hold forth the *Gentiles* privilege of being ingrafted in the *Jews* room, and that God kepted the same way with them as with *Israel*, having admitted them to that same Covenant.

It will not be meet nor needful to enquire after mysteries in the number or names; it is like, the Lord, giving His Church the title of *Israel*, followeth the reckoning of twelve Tribes, and multiplieth that by twelves, which cometh in whole to that number one hundred fourty and four thousand. We shall only touch these things as considerable,

1. That in the order, the age is not kepted, and children of the bond and free-woman are promiscuously named; to let us see, that in Christ Jesus there are neither *Jew* nor *Greek*, bond nor free; and that external privileges are of no value, *Gal. 3. 28.* 2. *Judah* is preferred and first named, and *Reuben*, though the first-born, passed by, 1. To shew that relation to Christ, who was of the Tribe of *Judah*, and of whom *David* was, casteth the ballance and is the main privilege. 2. *Reuben* lost his birth-right by defiling his fathers bed; and *Simon*, by his killing the *Sichemites*: Whence it is clear, that guiltiness cutteth men off from Priviledges, and hath a broad and long rail of curses for a long continuance, *Gen. 49. 3, 4.* 3. Neither *Dan* nor *Ephraim* are mentioned; but for *Ephraim*, *Joseph* is named; *Dan* is also omitted, (*1 Chron. 1. 3, 4.*) when all the other Tribes are reckoned in their genealogies; so also *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*, in *Dent. 33.* It would seem for these reasons, (for, that conceit of omitting *Dan* here, because Antichrist is to come of him, is a groundless fable, and rejected by *Bellar. lib. 3. de Pontif. cap. 12.* who expoundeth the Scriptures ordinarily alledged, for proving that in a different sense) 1. To shew, Gods Sovereignty, manifesting it self especially in His passing-by of some and reckoning others in His Roll, no less guilty. 2. To conform the number to the ordinary reckoning of *Israel* by twelve Tribes and no more, wherefore still one is omitted in the former reckonings. This number had

not been kepted, if *Dan* had been numbered when *Levi* also is mentioned. 3. *Dan* was soon overtaken with Idolatry, so was *Ephraim*, *Judges 1. 18.* therefore not meet to be mentioned among these, or as types of these who were to be kepted clean from that sin. 4. *Levi* is mentioned here, though not in the dividing of the land of *Canaan*; to shew, that though God allow not much temporal estate on His Ministers, yet will He not prejudice them of His Protection under straits either spiritual or temporal, nor of the victory over them.

These are all who are sealed of the numberless multitude; and this equal number amongst the Tribes, is not to be understood, as if all were equal in respect of the effect; But, 1. To shew it is indifferent to God to take of this or that Nation now, as there was to Him no difference amongst the Tribes of *Israel*. 2. That there is need of a special and particular care, and that He conformeth His care so, not in gross and common, but particularly taking notice of them to a definit sum. Hence, *Observe,*

1. From the complexness of this sealing and number, and from the name that these sealed ones getteth, to wit, that they are called the Tribes of *Israel*, That Believers, under the New Testament, are Gods *Israel*, ingrafted in their room and served Heirs to all their essential Priviledges and Promises, and Heirs of *Abraham*, as Believers were under the Old Testament; whatever typical Promises were peculiar to that people, we are not to claim, yet, certainly these Priviledges or Promises that belonged to their eternal well-being, or were necessary to their spiritual growth and happiness here, Believers under the New Testament are served Heirs thereunto, *Gal. 3. 29.* *If ye be Christs, then are ye Abrahams seed, and heirs according to the promise.* *Obs.* 2. Folks may be partakers of many outward Priviledges, and yet these not secure them from an approaching Plague, if they be not partakers of Spiritual Priviledges beside. *Israel* were all Gods People and Children; to them pertained the Adoption and Covenants in respect of external administration; and so it was with the Church of the Gentiles which succeeded: but, *Rom. 9. 6.* *They are not all Israel, who are of Israel;* neither because they are the seed of *Abraham* are they all children, neither is he a *Jew* who is one outwardly. *Obs.* 3. That Christs care is very special of His Elect, where-ever they are He taketh notice of them, in all their difficulties He hath a special and peculiar eye over them, He doth not gather them by heaps, but one by one. *Isaiah 27. 12.* not by guess, but by special designation, He seeth to their preservation, *John 10. 3.* *He calleth His sheep by name, and leadeth them out:* The most incon-

Inconsiderable of them are provided-for, and sheltered from this storm. This is much for the consolation of Believers, and it is the very end why this numbering and sealing is set down here, to tell, that not only Christ hath a care of all Believers in general, but of every one of them in particular. *Observe* 4. That sealing and defending against declining or defection in Error, is no common privilege; they are marked, here one and there one, who are made partakers of it, a few of some Tribes, and of some none, to shew the singularity of this mercy, and to point, as at our Lords care, so also at his Sovereignty who pitched upon whom he will, to preserve from the tri-

als of the time: it is not because they are better than others, but their through-bearing lieth in his purpose about them, and his sealing, discerning and differencing of them from others. Lastly, There are but very few, considering the multitude that perisheth, that shall be kept free and saved in such a trial: it will be a rare thing to stand, when the storm of Error bloweth; many shall follow the pernicious waves of false Teachers, 2 *Ptt.* 2. 1, &c. If it were possible, the Elect should be seduced. *Revel.* 13. The world wondereth after the beast, so that it concerneth us to be humble, watchful and on our guard, that we be not led away with the Error of the wicked.

## LECTURE IV.

*Verf. 9. After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands:*

*10. And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*

**T**He Lord, having described to John and discovered to him, in the beginning of the Chapter, the hazard the Church was in by a coming storm, he layeth two grounds for confirming the Faith of his people.

The first is, the care of the Elect under that storm, to *vers. 9.* The second, is, the happy estate the Church should be in after that storm should be over.

For clearing the meaning of this part of the Chapter, we are to enquire in these particulars, 1. Who are to be understood by these that are here mentioned and left innumerable? 2. To what time it relateth, or what state of the Church, whether Militant or Triumphant? 3. What is the scope of it, and the reason of setting it down in such expressions? Then we shall particularly open the words, which have two parts, 1. What generally John of himself saw and heard concerning the happy and comfortable state of that great company, to *vers. 13.* 2. What further was taught him by one of the Elders, inviting him to enquire further concerning them.

For the first, what this company, that have palms in their hands, is? we say, 1. They differ from the hundred forty and four thousand mentioned before, 1. in number, being more than they. 2. In extent, their reckoning was out of tribes, as it were, of one Kingdom; these are out of all Nations, Kindreds, &c. 3. In respect of posture or place, the hundred forty and four thousand are sealed ones on the earth, secret and hid; this company is seen openly professing, standing before the Throne, and it is not said of them they were marked. 4. The former are sealed for a coming storm, to shew the danger they were to be in, and as having no commerce with others. Therefore it is said, (*Chap. 14. 3.*) *no man could learn their song but themselves.* This great company have palms in their hands, as an open sign of Victory, therefore are they said, (*ver. 14.*) *to be come out of great tribulation;* and their song is publick, with a loud voice. Beside, that by that transition, *after these things I saw,* is particularly holden forth a different company to represent a different thing relating to a subsequent state of the Church in respect of its numerosness and prosperity, opposite to the former.

This company then being different from the sealed ones spoken of before, we say they belong not to that time; but they follow it. Which appeareth, 1. (as we hinted at before) by that

transition, *after these things, I saw,* importing not only an order in what he saw as to his seeing, but as to the things seen, that is, after a sealed company succeeded a great innumerable company, for liberty and publickness of profession, not needing to be sealed. 2. They are come out of great tribulation, *vers. 14.* but the former sealed ones were under it. The sealed ones were strivers; these are victors; therefore must succeed them, as victory doth to fighting. 3. More particularly, by these sealed ones are understood the hundred forty and four thousand mentioned, *Chap. 14. vers. 1, 2.* Which belongeth unto and is contemporary with the prophesie of the trumpets, as appeareth by *Chap. 9. 4.* and *13. 8.* and *14. 3, 4.* But by this innumerable company, we conceive, are to be understood the same who stand on the sea of glass, having gotten victory over the beast, having Harps in their hands, *Chap. 15. 1, 2.* The properties, exercise and case agree to both; which number are after the everlasting Gospel is preached through the earth, *Chap. 14. vers. 6.* and the cry of Babylons begun ruine is proclaimed, and so belongeth to the prophesie of the vials.

Out of all which then, we conceive, that here is hinted at and held forth the increase and liberty of the Church after the darkness of Antichrist shall be over and the Gospel of new, as it were, sent through the earth; Saints then shall be innumerable, and full victors and conquerours in comparison of their paucity and restraint under Antichrists growth and height.

The second Question, is, To what time or state of the Church it relateth? *Ans.* For the time, it is signified before to belong to the vials, which hold forth the enemies ruine and the Churches rising, yet because there are three steps or degrees of the Churches victory, 1. From Antichrists begun ruine, till by degrees it be fully consumed. 2. From his ruine to the end of the world, in the Churches trials with Gog and Magog, &c. 3. The Churches entry into the new Jerusalem: all which degrees, are begun, continued and perfected under the vials. It may be asked to which of these degrees, or if to all of them, this belongeth? We think indeed it looketh to all these, holding forth the happiness of Gods people in their victory over Antichrist, and, in their outgate from these troubles and trials, shewing how happy they should be when these storms should be over, which in part is begun here; but leaveth them not till it put them in heaven, and Glory there.



1. Because that compleateth their victory; and victories here, are but parts, types, and earnest of their victory there. 2. Because that victory is the main and common consolation of all fighters; and so suiteth well and best with the scope, as taking in all. 3. Because all those steps of victories belong to the vials, and are one continued and pursued victory from its beginning to its close. Neither, secondly, do we exclude, but include the Churches happy and flourishing condition on earth, not only for the former reasons, whereby it is clear they cannot be separated; but also because of its scope, which is to shew the Churches estate here in time; and the other characters of its being subsequent immediately to the sealed company, as succeeding to them, as also its being contemporary with the vials in their rise and progress, confirm this.

For the third Question, What is the reason that the temporal & flourishing condition of the Church-militant, is set down under such noble expressions as agree to the Church-triumphant? *Ans.* 1. Because it is one continued victory, the begun happiness and flourishing condition of the Church and their happy condition in Glory hereafter being divided in so many parts, and Heaven is the last, longest, and fullest part of it. 2. Because it is ordinary in this Book to describe and stile the Church-militant, by Heaven; and the Beauty and Glory of the Church, by that of Heaven; the happiness of the Church here, by the happiness of Heaven hereafter. 3. The expressions of the Prophets speaking of the Gospels flourishing, or of a flourishing estate of the Jewish Church after the captivity, are thus large, as, *Isa.* 25. 8. and 35. 10. and 47. 10. and 51. 11. which expressions may be borrowed (as many other) from the Prophets in this Book; and are both to set forth the excellent estate of the Church in itself during that time; and also being compared with its former obscure condition, it is like heaven in respect of what it was. 4. The outward judgement on persecutors (*Chap.* 6.) was described by hel and the last judgement, the one being to them the beginning of the other: so, upon the contrary, this happy estate of the Church, is described by heaven in opposition thereto, as is suitable.

More particularly the words hold out the begun happiness of the Church here, after Antichrists begun fall, and her growing in that happy condition, never to be so darkened again as formerly, till it be perfected in heaven. The consolation hath two parts, (as we shew before,) 1. What John saw and heard, from *vers.* 9. to *vers.* 13. 2. A more particular explication of the former, from *vers.* 13. to the end.

The general description or what John saw and heard, hath two parts, suitable to *Chap.* 4. and 5. One is of the redeemed Church preceeding. The second is of the Angels going alongst with them. The former, *vers.* 9, 10. The latter, *vers.* 11, 12.

The first of them, is set out in these three circumstances, 1. In the order as they stand, *After this I beheld, and lo a great multitude*, to put difference betwixt one thing and another in time, yet immediately following it: the meaning is, when the former strait of the Church was over, and the hidden ones kept secret under Gods stamp, I saw a great multitude come out and publicly avow and profess Christs Gospel. 2. They are described by their number, it was great and innumerable, not to God, who hath them all written by name in His Book; known to Him are all from the beginning: 2 *Tim.* 2. *the Lord knoweth who are his.* But, 1. It was a great multitude in itself, that no man could number, as the stars and sand of the sea are called innumerable and *Abraham's* seed. 2. Comparatively, or in comparison of the little number that was before under Antichrists dominion; that might have been within mens reckoning, but this was hugely beyond it. 3. They are described from their extent, of all Nations, Kindreds, &c. in opposition to the former paucity of Tribes, which might be in one Kingdom when the Church was as shut up, now there shall be an enlargement

as observable, as at the Gospels first spreading, to point at the spreading that the rise of the Gospel should have after antichrists begun ruine, it should be such as was after Christs Ascension. 4. They are described from the place where, and the posture wherein, they stood; they are before the Throne of God, and they stand there. 1. Before the Throne, that is, in the Church; here they are brought in, that were strangers before, and in Heaven they shall be compleated hereafter: for we understand the Throne here, (as *Chap.* 4.) as representing either the place of Glory or Gods favourable presence to His Church. 2. They stand there: which pointeth at two things, First, Their dependence on God and Christ; they stand as servants attending their Master, as *vers.* 15. presenting themselves before Him after their victories. Secondly, Their publick owning and acknowledging of Him for their victory & liberty. Thirdly, They stand in white robes, well adorned, & palms in their hands: with white robes, a sign of Glory, *Chap.* 3. 4. and a sign of Innocency (*Chap.* 14. 4.) and victory, 19. 8. having a more beautiful luster upon them than before; with palms in their hands, a sign of victory and joy in a full measure, suitable to these who had gotten their heads above all difficulties, *Mat.* 21. 8. 5. They are described from their work and exercise, which is set down, (*vers.* 10.) in the matter and in the manner. 1. In the manner, they cry out with a loud voice: To shew, 1. the good reason they had to bless Him. 2. The good will and heartiness they had to do it. 3. The publickness of their profession, and the spreading of it, whereas the Song of the hundred forty and four thousand was secret; none could learn their Song, *Chap.* 14. this is publick and avowed, they care not who hear their Song. 2. The matter of their Song, is in few words, but very material. In general, it is to ascribe to God the glory of their victory, as to the author of it, and to Christ as Mediator, as the great mean and procurer of it. It taketh in the rise, progress, and perfecting of their happiness (spiritual and temporal, it is all Salvation, and Salvation from all things that may hurt His people. More particularly, this Salvation is ascribed to God, as the fountain and efficient cause, in whose Counsel the work of salvation bred, and was concluded; and it is ascribed to Christ, as the meritorious cause and procurer of it. To point out, 1. That their Salvation is in Him, and belongeth to Him. 2. That their Salvation is no where else to be gotten, *Isa.* 43. 1. and 21. appropriateth it to God, so as it excludeth all others. 3. It is an attributing not only Salvation in the general to God, but this same particular delivery from Antichrists sin, snares, his idols and ignorance, *Psal.* 3. 8. 4. It is the giving or ascribing the Glory to Himself alone, and so an acknowledging of the freeness of it, that it was for no deserving or worth in them.

5. Christ is joyned with God, because all Grace and Salvation is given in Him, and for Him to the Church, He is not unknown in the administration of Grace, therefore neither should He be in His Peoples thanksgiving. 6. His Salvation is mainly as He is a Saviour to save from sin, *Mat.* 1. 21. therefore this loud cry in uttering and attributing Salvation only to God and to the Lamb is not in respect of the outward delivery alone, but in respect of the Doctrine of Justification, which was before obscured and divided amongst many merits and Mediators: now it is vindicated, and they publickly and openly confess it, and ascribe it to God only, as the fountain and efficient cause; and to Christ alone, as the meritorious, laying the weight and the honour of their eternal Salvation on God and Christ alone, without parting them among any other, or mixing in merit, purgatory, penance, or any other thing of that kind, as formerly had been done.

This then is the first part of this general description, which is John's describing the happy condition of the redeemed Church; Or, our Lord, to strengthen the

the faith of his people, revealeth the happy outgate ere ever the storm come on. Hence, *Observe*;

1. The most sad and forest storms of the Church and people of God, have a rest and a victory at the back of them: The most sad estate of the Church, hath a happy and glorious victory following it. There was a storm spoken of before, and what a glorious outgate is here! This is a truth that holdeth good, whether we expound the words of their temporal or eternal Salvation, it is a comfortable conclusion laid for the comfort of Gods people, and fully proven, *Heb. 4. 9.* that there remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God; and let it be fixed in us, the best estate of Gods people is ever hindmost; their last estate is their best, just contrary to that the wicked have to expect: when the temporal happiness of the wicked shall turn in a curse, then sighing and weeping shall pass away from the people of God. 2. Gods proposing this outgate beforehand for their comfort, sheweth, That there is no solide way to bear a trial wel without the faith of the outgate, so that the eyeing of the outgate of a storm, while folks are under it, or their thinking on the happy estate that followeth difficulties, is the best way to moderate one under difficulties; therefore when the Lord threatned the captivity, he gave them many promises in *Isaiah* concerning their return from it, ere ever it came on, to arme and guard the faith of his people from sinking under it. This sustained also *Moses*, *Heb. 11. 23.* and *Paul*, *2 Cor. 4. 17, 18.* There is an amiable sight beyond all straits, if we would by the right prospect view them. 3. Heaven and Glory is the compleat outgate of Believers trials, and should be Believers main consolation while they are under trials; for, though the temporal happiness of the Church be holden out here, we exclude not, but include (as we shew in the exposition) their happiness in heaven, where their victory is perfected: if in this life only we had hope, of all men we were the most miserable. 4. Heaven and Glory must be an excellent thing, a very happy, satisfying, comfortable condition; a brave life, 1. Excellent company, God and the Lamb, the congregation of the first-born. 2. An excellent place, before the Throne, beholding his Glory and sharing of it; and if a place in heaven be more Glorious, this is it, 3. Though many Angels and Saints be with them, yet they are mainly taken up with beholding God, shining in the Lamb. 4. Their adorning and ornament; they are alwayes walking in white; pure, clean, and constantly victorious; their vile bodies made conform to the glorious body of Christ. 5. They have palms in their hands, triumphing and rejoicing. 6. Their work and task is, alwayes to be singing; the song of free Grace maketh heaven ring, and they weary not in it, but are alwayes praising God, as there is alwayes ground; by praising, enjoying; and by enjoying, praising him: if ye would have a happy life, is there any life like this? Better stand here and look on, than sit on the Thrones of the World. Look if ye have the faith of enjoying it. Is there not a possibility of it? Or, think ye all this is spoken for nought? No, believe it, they are the true and faithful sayings of God; *Johns* testimony, is, that he saw it in the Spirit, and it is left on record to the Church for confirmation of her Faith, and if there be not a happiness beyond it, nor comparable to it, choose it; it were begun happiness to be brought this length. There are many of you who hear me that will misse this brave life; if God help you not to stand before him here, and here to begin your song, you will not stand nor sing before him hereafter; and a woful misse will it be. 5. Folks in heaven are not silent; as many as are there, are praising; dumb Christians are not heaven-like, *They that dwell in thy house will be still*

*praising thee*, and it is a part of their blessedness so to be exercised, *Psal. 84.* as the Saints enjoy God, so they praise him; they speak to his praise, and honour him in their conversation, they have good matter of a song, and good will to sing; and it is an ill token when folks presume to come to heaven, and yet have no good will to honour God here. 6. As this company representeth the Church militant; *Observe*, That the enlargement of the Church and its thriving, even in external profession, is a beautiful sight. To see a Church, 1. In doctrine, pure, 2. In the number of professors; many. And 3. publick in their liberty and boldness. And, 4. In their Authority, weighty; it is like the company of two Armies, and that with Banners, to see many professors and a suitableness in their practice, pure Doctrine, and pure Ordinances, powerful and fruitful: though folks call them forms, there is much of Gods beauty that shineth in them; and if it be a beautiful sight to see a Church thriving in purity of Doctrine and Ordinances, and Discipline in order and decency, it should be as sad a sight to see the carved work pulled down; Antichristian darkness, or that which is no better, coming in, and confusion in stead of order; as the one should refresh us, the other should weight us. 7. A flourishing condition of the Church for number and liberty in Profession, often go together, as we may see by comparing this estate under the vials with the former. The one is the ordinary mean of engaging men to the other, and the marring of the one cannot but mar the other. 8. From the matter of the song, It telleth us what is to be gotten in God and Christ, even compleat salvation of all sorts, and from all fears and dangers. Needeth any Believer then to fear, seeing God and the Lamb have Salvation? Salvation belongeth not to Armies of men, to men of high place and power, nor to men of riches, wit and policy, but to God, It is his peculiar property and prerogative; and what less then have Gods people at one time nor at another, since he hath Salvation at command? and he can give it Commission when he will, and when he commissioneth it, it will come, *Psal. 68. 20.* Our God is the God of salvation: Salvation holdeth of him, and to whom but to him belongeth the issues from death? Let none then ascribe it to any other, nor seek it elsewhere, nor let any be discouraged, when they desire it, it is in a good hand, *Isa. 43. 11.* He will nor give his Glory to another; he bestoweth it, and the Lamb purchase it. 2. Let it comfort Gods people in an anxious time. The faith of Gods having Salvation in his hand; may guard the heart and keep from much perplexing anxiety that folks are put to under difficulties, *Psal. 3. 8.* Salvation belongeth to the Lord, thy blessing is upon thy people. 9. Salvation to our God and to the Lamb: They ascribe it to him, that hold it of him, *Observe*, That nothing is more heaven-like; than a humble holding of Salvation of God, and ascribing to him the glory of it. This is Heavens Song; Heaven is full of it, to denude our selves, and hold all of free grace, to ascribe Salvation freely to God and to the Lamb. And as this becometh glory well, so it glorifieth God, while folks are labouring under a body of death, to say, it is not to them, but to him; that the glory of their Salvation belongeth; to wash their hands of any good given them, or that they may expect; to acknowledge his freedom in that which they are to get, as well as his riches in that which they have gotten, this is the likest life to heaven, to be still praising free Grace. 10. Heaven, and the song that will be in heaven, may comfort Gods people, even in time; under these difficulties they meet with here: the hope of what is coming may alley and only can alley the bitterness of what is present.



## LECTURE V.

Verf. 11. *And all the Angels stood round about the throne, and about the Elders, and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God.*

12. *Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour and power, and might be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.*

13. *And one of the Elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?*

14. *And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest.—*

**W**E told you that the scope of the Spirit in these words, is, to give a little glimpse of the glorious outgate the Church of Christ should have after the storm of Antichrist, and these corrupt teachers that were coming to lay the Church low. This outgate is, 1. generally represented to John from *vers. 9. to vers. 12.* and then more particularly explicated by an Elder to John, from *verse 13. to the end.*

The first hath two parts: The first whereof, is the representation of the redeemed Church standing before the throne with white robes, and palms in their hands, and a sweet song in their mouth, whereof we have spoken. In the 11, and 12. Verses, there is a further enlargement and explication of that glorious estate of the Church, and the Saints happiness, by bringing in all the Angels, admiring Gods goodness to his Church, and taking a share of the Song of praises with them, it being such a glorious piece of work, as would serve not only all the saints, but the angels also: so then in these two Verses, is set down the Angels approbation of, and concurrence with, the redeemed Church.

The scope of it is, to shew, 1. The harmony that is among Saints and Angels in their praising God. 2. To shew how excellent and glorious a ground of praise, a flourishing and victorious estate of the Church, hath in it; and that by it God giveth evidences of his glory to Angels, Principalities, and Powers, &c. *Eph. 3. 10.* 3. To shew, that Angels delight in the Churches flourishing, and in the thriving of the Gospel. *Luke 15. 7.* there is joy in heaven at the conversion of a sinner: so here, by holding forth the in-coming of many sinners and the spreading of the light of the Gospel, all the Angels are made cheerful at the news of it. 4. To shew the excellency of the thing; the exceeding greatness of the Glory of God, and the excellency of the work of praise, it will and doth take up Angels to go about it, it is a work becoming even them. The glorious condition abiding the Church, shall furnish all the Angels in heaven matter of praise; and the hope of such a glorious outgate, might exceedingly comfort John and others who were to live under those difficulties.

More particularly, this company of Angels is set out, 1. In their posture, *they stand*; and they are set out in the same posture, *Chap. 5.* The reason of their standing, is, to shew not only their reverencing of God, but their great dependence on God, as servants waiting for direction from him, and their readiness to obey what orders he giveth them. It signifieth also their privilege to stand there, *Deut. 10. 8.* 2. They are set out in the place where they stand; *it is about the throne, Elders and beasts* (as we shew, *Chap. 6.*) to signify the end of their service; it is to watch over the Church that is between Gods throne and them, they are without as a guard and wall to the

redeemed Church, they are ministring Spirits all of them, for the heirs of Salvation, *Heb. 1. 14.* Therefore it is said, *all the Angels*; they surround the Throne and the Church, keeping them in, and keeping out from them any thing that may annoy them; and consequently, they are round about the innumerable multitude mentioned before, *ver. 9.* who were before the Throne: yea. It would appear, that these, being here omitted (though that be their place, and *Elders* and *Beasts* mentioned to stand there where formerly they stood) must be comprehended under the elders or beasts, seeing the place and guard is all one, and the distinction that is put between them, is but as a difference of the whole Catholick Church, signified by the Elders, from such a particular company brought through Antichrists tribulation, *ver. 14. 15.* and at such a time, & in such a case as a part of the whole; and in these respects, distinguished from the whole, which strengtheneth the exposition we gave before of these *Elders* representing the Church of God; for, probably they had not been omitted, if they had been a party distinct from the Church, otherways than a part is from the whole: neither can any other reason be given, why these Elders do not join in praise with the Church or Angels, as *Chap. 4. and 5. &c.* when the praise is so solemn, but because their joyning, or praise, was formerly expressed by the company mentioned, *ver. 9. 10.* For, it is not to be imagined they were now silent at such an occasion. 3. They are set out in their worshipping, or, *falling on their faces*; which is to be Spiritually understood, seeing Angels have no bodies, and cannot be properly said to fall on their faces: It is to signify their acknowledgement of the exceeding great distance between God and them, the most holy creatures, and the reverence due from them to him, as *Isaiah 6.* they are said to cover their faces with wings, because of the adorable holiness of God, to which even they wanted a proportionableness; so here they are said to *fall on their faces*, to shew the exceeding great distance that is between the Majesty of God and the most excellent creatures. 2. To acknowledge the greatness of the work they had in hand, to wit, the praising of God for the enlargement of the Church. 4. They are described in respect of their Song, which is set down, *ver. 12.* wherein we have three things considerable; or, which we are to consider in these three respects, 1. In respect of the matter, expressed in seven words, *blessing, honour, glory, &c.* like the matter of the Song, *Chap. 5.* all to one purpose. 2. In respect of its object. 3. In respect of its manner.

To shew, 1. That words are wanting, and cannot be gotten, even by Angels in heaven, to express the glory due to God; they are swallowed up with it, it goeth beyond their conception and expression; for it over reacheth all created expressions & apprehensions so far that it is no marvel it do so here. 2. To shew that whatever is glorious, or a ground of thanksgiving, or the object of praise, or the subject of commendation, it is in Him, and in

Him alone, and to be attributed to Him with all humility by the most glorious creatures; it is in Him, and not in them, A consideration, 1. exceedingly upstirring to praise and admire Him, 2. To cry down in comparison all other things, as weak and empty. 3. Comfortable to Gods people, who have all these things in Him alone. There is no ground of praise imaginable, nor any thing which might have laid, or may lay, any obligation on a creature to God, as having obtained a good turn, but that is in God, and may be expected from Him. 4. To shew our duty both in dependence on Him, and thanksgiving to Him. 2. This Song is to be considered in respect of the object of it: in which respect, it differeth from the Song of the redeemed to God and the Lamb, yet they meet in one; for, it includeth not the Lamb, but taketh Him in with the Father and Spirit. This being divine Worship, proper and peculiar to God, Christ in it is looked on as God; and God here is essentially to be considered. Whence we may gather, how to interpret their Song, Chap. 5. the one, no question, being of equal extent with the other. 3. This song is to be considered in respect of its manner, 1. That it is in generals, as most comprehensive; for, (Psal. 106. 2.) *who can shew forth all his praise? His thoughts to upward passe reckoning, Psal. 40. 5.* 2. That it beginneth and endeth with *Amen*, as consisting more in their affection and wish, than in their expression, beginning with a conviction that it overpowereth them, yet undertaking it, as Psal. 106. and going on, and no more satisfied at the close than when they began, but ending just so as alway beginning, and beginning so as never to end; An evidence of a good frame of these that praise; they are as ready to begin when they have done, as when they began, rather thinking their praise a consenting to praise, than actual praising.

Observe here, 1. What a God this is whom we worship, whom all the Angels do thus worship and adore, and stand in such reverence of, that they cover their faces, Isa. 6. They want words and are swallowed up through the deep apprehension of the Majesty, Glory, Greatness, and Goodness of God: what a God must this be that they reverence, stand in awe of, and are so affected with the Glory that shineth in Him? They do His will perfectly, and yet they fall upon their faces before Him. What a dreadful God is this? and what poor thoughts have we of Him? Little knowledge of Him maketh us have so short and low conceptions of Him; had we a glimpse of His Glory, sitting on His Throne of Majesty, it would daze us; and if Angels thus exalt Him, what should we do? *Obse.* 2. These that are nearest Him, and partake most of Him, will presse most for exalting Him, and will be most taken up with the Glory that is in Him; it is not good to be satisfied with our own conceptions of God; Angels are not so.

2. From the matter and occasion of the Song, *Observe*, That the flourishing estate of the Church, is one of the greatest evidences of Gods Glory in the world, and one of the greatest grounds of praise. By the flourishing of the Church, I mean the multiplying of Professors, purity of Ordinances, backed with power and some suitableness in the practice of Professors. This is it that wakeneth and beginneth the Angels Song, and the Song of the Redeemed, and carrieth it on; the glory of Wisdom, Power, free Grace and Love, shineth here; Eph. 3. 10. *That he might shew unto the principalities and powers by the Church the manifold wisdom of God.* He maketh them wonder to behold so much wisdom, in suiting Grace to sinners case and need, so much condescendency, in pardoning freely; so much power, in overcoming mens stubbornness, &c. and shall they wonder at this, and praise for it? and shall not we wonder and praise, and be affected with it for our own good, who are partaking of that they praised for before hand, for that we have these pure Ordinances after the removal of Antichristian darkness? It is a proof of this truth, and a part of the accomplishment of

this prophesie, and should stir us up to make this use of it.

*Obj.* 3. If things be well searched in God, there is nothing that can be a ground of praise, but it is in Him, and may be expected from Him, blessing and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, &c. Blessing, is all matter that may give occasion to bless Him for making us blessed; Glory, taketh in all glory, every thing that maketh God glorious, or us to account Him glorious, and Glory itself; and matter of thanksgiving, wisdom, honour, and the rest, are in Him; nothing is meet for the end, or meet as end to bring about that end, but it is in God, blessing being the end, there is wisdom, power, and might to bring about that end; they have then good ground of praise, that have God to be their God.

From the 13. *vers.* to the end, followeth a more particular enquiry concerning that number, which is followed with a more full description of them; and it hath three steps, or parts. 1. The Elders question to John, *vers.* 13. or, rather, two questions, *what are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?* 2. John's reply, *vers.* 14. *I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest.* 3. The Elders particular description to John of that blessed and happy company, 1. From whence they came: 2. What they are now. And 3. How they came at that happy condition. We need not stand here to dive who this Elder is, it suiteth with the scope and form of this prophesie, thus to expresse it by way of Dialogue, it being a question not of doubt or information to him who propounded it, but for incitation to him it was propounded unto, to enquire more in it, as a thing worthy to be known, and useful for opening the rest of the prophesie. This is the scope of the Quere, to make John ask; yet considering that John here personates one that is a Believer; and that by Elders are understood (probably) members of the true Church, It is not impertinent to look on it as signifying the help and usefulness of one member of the body to another, it may be, of more abilities in many things than themselves, as we shew before, Chap. 5. It holdeth out, (in a word) four generals, 1. That when the people of God are dul, He wavereth not means to waken and rouse them up. 2. That God will make use of weak means and instruments sometimes to stir up these that are more strong. 3. John personating all to whom this prophesie should come, He would have him more particular in the enquiry after the knowledge of these things contained in it, which should stir us up to search, and not sleight what he revealeth. Yea, 4. it implyeth, that God will have many precious things revealed, we, in the mean time, neither understanding them, nor enquiring after them, till he stir us up.

Johns reply, is, *vers.* 14. *modest and short, Sir, thou knowest:* wherein, beside Johns reverend way of speaking, there is implied, 1. Johns ignorance, he denieth that he knew, only he saw them, he knew no further concerning this company. 2. A desire to be taught of him who knew what they were. It is a reverend humble insinuation of His expectation that he should tel and answer His own questions, which accordingly followeth, as if he said, Sir, thou canst answer thy question thy self, and I expect thou wilt do it; it is no shame to be ignorant of some things, especially in this prophesie, and to vent our ignorance, so as we may have our knowledge helped. John hath advantage by this, He hath a more full explication of what he knew not, holden out to Him. It were good we walked in the sense of our ignorance, and made more use of the means of knowledge.

For the Elders answer, it hath three things in it, 1. What the former condition of the redeemed Church was, *great tribulation*, probably relating not to the common afflictions and tribulations that all that will live Godly must suffer, but these trials signified by the trumpets under Antichrist. 2. What their present estate was, exceeding prosperous, *vers.* 15. to the end. 3. How they pass from the one to the other, it was by washing their garments and making them white in the Lambs blood.



*Observe 1.* That the first view or representation of things, is not enough for us: we can see, and hear, and understand little, till it be pressed on us. *2.* God loveth that we be taught, and provideth means for instructing and upstirring of His own so far as He thinketh needful. *3.* If it came not of Him, the best would lye in ignorance, and it may be, not endeavour to know, partly thinking it desperate and presumption to enquire into it, partly, negligent and not thinking it needful, but curious, as many do, to enquire into these things, and so abstain from the search of this prophetic. The best have need of upstirring; and by these questions, not only John is stirred up for the time;

but in him, all that might after read these prophecies, to enquire in them. *4.* John's answer is humble and reverend, reaching us rather to acknowledge our ignorance than we may learn, than to hide it and continue ignorant. *5.* That many may be and are ignorant in the matters of this prophetic. *6.* That no occasion of learning would be omitted, nor no instrument or mean excepted against, but all made use of for learning, *7.* Gods end in posing with hard questions, is, to help to know what we understand not. This question propounded to John, is neither to shame him, nor draw him in a snare, but to bring him to clearness in that he was dark in.

## LECTURE VI.

*Verf. 14. ----- And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

*15. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.*

*16. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the Sun light on them, nor any heat.*

*17. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*

**T**hat which we have now to speak of, is the Elders reply to John, wherein he insisteth in the description of that excellent company; so that the words continue the description of the former innumerable multitude, in these three, *1.* What was the condition they were brought from, or what had been their former condition; *These are they which came out of great tribulation.* *2.* By what means they had come from, or had gotten victory over, or freedom from that great tribulation, *by washing their robes, and making them white in the blood of the Lamb.* *3.* From the *15. verf.* and forward, he insisteth in describing what their present and happy estate and condition was.

For the first, *vers. 14.* they are said to have come out of great tribulation. Tribulation is spoken of, *Act. 14. 21.* in general, as the way to Heaven and Glory. But this being spoken of as a great tribulation, in an eminent degree, and that company somewhat singularly differenced from others, by this, that they are come out of it, it would appear, that by it is meant the tribulation under Antichrists persecution, and by that company, these that are brought through after his begun fall, and *Chap. 15.* are said to have gotten the victory over him: for, that difficulty under Antichrist, is the main one after Heathenish persecution, and that to which this former sealing relateth, as is said.

For the second, the mean of their through-bearing to this happy estate, is mentioned also, *vers. 14.* nor their own innocency; they needed washing; nor their own sufferings or works, these made them not white; but it was the blood of the Lamb, by taking themselves alannerly to his satisfaction, they attained this righteousness, and were made partakers of this blessed estate, by which also they are said to prevail, *Chap. 12.* That red blood can make bloody souls white; it is of such an excellent virtue. These folks, when the rest of the world were worshipping idols, and all that professed Christianity were following a self-righteousness, and absolution by penance, indulgences, &c. fled to Jesus Christ for refuge, and they, by this righteousness and satisfaction alone, are made white, pardoned of sin, and

brought to this happy condition, and not by any thing in themselves? though they kept themselves free from the corruption of the time, yet this effect is not attributed to that, but to their washing, &c.

For the third, Their present happy condition is enlarged in the last three Verses of the Chapter, and set down onely as a consequent of their suffering, but flowing from their making use of the Lambs blood as the cause thereof; *Therefore*, that is, not because they suffered such tribulation, but because they washed their robes, and made them white in Christs blood.

Their happy condition is set out in these following circumstances, or steps, which shew what a happiness they were brought unto, *1.* In the place of enjoying their happiness, *before the Throne of God, and in His Temple*, which is in His Church here begun, by fellowship in His Ordinances, and in Heaven compleatly, when they are presented before Gods Throne in Glory. *2.* In their service and work, and the un-interruptedness of it, *they serve Him night and day*, and have place among Angels that stand by, *Zech. 3.* freed from selfishness and a body of death; and not doing this service by fits, but constantly, aluding (probably) to the Priests, which in their courses were admitted night and day to be in the Temple, *Psal. 134. 1.* This is a special part of their happiness, that entirely now in them, against the service of God, being taken away, that their delight therein is not marred: and this is brought in, *1.* to shew their privilege, that they did need no Priest, nor intervenient mean to help them. *2.* To shew there was no intermission in their service, no whoring from God; but, as the Angels in Heaven, so do they the will of God cheerfully and delightfully. A third step of their happy condition, is in the end of *vers. 15.* and is set out by enjoying of Gods company, which is the object of that blessed condition, *He that sitteth on the Throne shall dwell among them*, that is, they shall not be at a distance with God, nor He at a distance with them; but He shall make Himself familiarly known to them, and there will be no intermission of their sense and joy. They shall not have communion with God by starts, but He shall constantly and fully manifest Himself as dwelling in one

one house with them, and they in His company for ever. This word *dwelling*, is to sojourn in a tent, spoken of Christs being in the flesh, *Joh. 1. 14.* which may look to Gods making Himself manifest in Ordinances, till this tent be taken down; thus it agreeth to the Church-militant, wherein no such interruption of Gods presence shall be after that time, as had been before under Antichrist. The fourth step or part of their happy condition, is in *vers. 16.* wherein their happiness is set out by their freedom from all crosses and natural defects and infirmities, and mens violence. There is neither hunger, nor thirst, nor scorching heat of the Sun, that is, no persecution, if figuratively taken, as *Matth. 13.* nor distemper of air, or weather, nor any thing hurtfull or noisome to the body, if properly taken. There was by the former phrase no sinfull defect, and now there is no sinless defect, which Christ was subject unto while He was here on earth, such as hunger or cold or weariness: there is nothing of that kind in Heaven, nothing to distemper their happiness or to impare their blessedness; nor the least blast that floweth from their natural infirmity within, nor from without by annoyance of the weather, as it is here on earth. The fifth is, a main step of their happiness, and it is given as the great ground and reason of all the rest, and serveth to confirm it, *vers. 17.* *For the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne, shall lead them; it shall be so, and can be no otherwayes; for, the Lamb Jesus Christ Himself, who is God on the Throne, equal to the Father, His care over them will be such as will admit no want, but will furnish all good: and this is set out in these two,* 1. He shall feed them; which comprehendeth all care over them and tenderness to them in Him; and also taketh in all provision needfull for their well-being in providing for them and feeding them, and over-seeing them, to keep them from any hurt, as a shepherd doth his flock, *Psal. 23.* He shall take them in His special guiding, without intervening of Ordinances or Ministers. 2. It is set out in the excellent pastures He shall feed them in, not at puddles or streams, nor every fountain, but *living fountains of waters*, which dry not up, able to quench all thirst, and to cool from all heat: called *living fountains*, 1. In opposition to all earthly consolations, which are but as standing and dead puddles or cisterns, or streams at best; but there are at His right hand fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore, *Psal. 16.* fountains and living fountains. 2. To shew the diversity and abundance of consolation that is to be had, and will be gotten in the presence of God, and of the Lamb in heaven. And, 3. *living fountains*; to shew the inexhaustibleness of them: it is closed with a word to confirm the former, *God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes*, that is, God shall put an end to all their misery, and there shall be neither sigh nor tear there, nor cause of tears, though they have never been in their life without tears on their cheeks; yet no sooner shall they enter in that blessed place, but Gods presence, and a glimpse of His favour shall so wipe them away, that none of them shall ever stick there any more, nor be seen there again. There are none among that happy company, that either actually weep, or shall have cause or occasion of weeping or sorrow for ever.

There are some of these excellent expressions applied by *Isaiah* to the Church, after its captivity, as may be seen, *Isai. 45. 10, &c.* and *25. 8.* and *35. 10.* and *51. 11, &c.* whereby it may not be inconsistent with the scope, to look upon this description as pointing at the begun victory of these Saints here, but perfected in Heaven, as we shew you at the entry on this part of the Chapter: however, more literally, it agreeth to heaven: and therefore we shall draw our Observations most from that consideration of them, and only apply them to the Churches happy estate here, 1. As begun. 2. As comparative with former straits. 3. Because in it self excellent and eminent by these privileges it enjoyed. Hence.

*Observe 1.* Gods people in difficult times, would be acquainting themselves with, and confirming themselves in the Faith of the happy estate of glory; for this end, it is so studiously proposed, much pains is taken to reveal and hold it forth: and the Lord stirreth up *John*, and in him other Believers, to look upon it and to believe and comfort themselves from the happy estate they shall meet with when their suffering shall have an end, 1. To prevent their fainting, in as far as heaven maketh an end of all their difficulties. 2. To make them submissive, because that time is coming. 3. To make their life lively and comfortable by the knowledge and faith of it, and the frequent meditation on it. This maketh a chearful, comfortable and submissive way of living under crosses and difficulties; this maketh Believers long for heaven, and to comfort themselves in their abiding empty handed for the time. 2. These are they that come out of great tribulation. Then tribulations, and great tribulations are the way to glory to them whom God loveth most: Jesus Christ Himself drank of the brook by the way, *Psal. 110. 7.* and was made low before He was exalted, and His Members follow the Head in a conformity of suffering, *Rom. 8. 28.* *Acts 14. 22.* Suffering could not look so grim and terrible-like, if what were on the back of it were well looked to. Let none think the worse of Glory, or that the happiness of Gods people is of less worth, because tribulations are in the way to it; neither let any prize an easy life in this world with Gods curse. This is far, better with all the tribulations that accompany it. 3. They have washed their garments in the blood of the Lamb, who came through tribulation ] *Observe*, These that are most righteous, whether in active obedience, in keeping the Law and Commandments, or, in passive obedience, in yielding their bodies to be burnt, they have need of Christs satisfaction to make them white: These Worthies kepted themselves free of the pollutions of the time, and shunned no suffering: and yet upon this account they appear not before God. Holiness is good, but in our seeking to appear before God, we are to seek to be found in Christ, *Phil. 3. 9.* Or, take the Doctrine thus, No merit of ours can bring through neither temporal nor spiritual judgements. These were free of common guiltiness, and shunned not, but endured all tribulations; yet, none of these are grounds of their through-bearing, but the washing of their garments in Christs blood. 4. As the greatest tribulations have an out-gate; and the greater the tribulation be, the greater and more glorious is the out-gate; and the greater the fight be, the victory is the more remarkable; Therefore are all these singularly pointed at here. So the blood of Christ is the best and onely out-gate from tribulations; fleeing to Christ for refuge, is the onely best way to escape all tribulations temporal or spiritual: for, we suppose, this coming out of tribulation, looketh to temporal affliction as well as delivery from eternal wrath. And indeed if the misknowing of Jesus Christ by a people that hear the Gospel, be the great cause of their temporal ruine, trouble and overthrow. *Luke 19. 42, 43.* *O that thou had known, in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. Therefore the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee: If the neglecting of Him, hasten judgement on the ungodly World, Then fleeing to Him, must be the best way to shun judgement, to take away the controversie, and to get an out-gate from tribulations when they are lying on. And there is nothing that we would more take notice of in this time; there are none but they would know how to be rid of the tryal and trouble that is lying on, This is the best way that can be taken. Jesus Christ taketh away the controversie, and maketh the sufferers white; we are conquerours: yea, more than conquerours through Christ who loved us, *Rom. 8. vers. 33.* 1. He strengthneth to stand and fight. 2. He hideth sin and removeth guilt, which is the rise of the controversie. 3. He giveth peace*



peace and a settled outgate; and outgates from tribulation any other way, whether by outward means, as armies, friendship, &c. or inward, as in our own holiness or satisfactions, are but the passing from one snare to another that is worse, and from one plague to a greater curse: and folks can never be said to come out of tribulation, while they lye under the wrath and curse of God. *Mic. 5. 4.* only this man shall be the peace, when the *Assyrian* shall come into our land. 5. From the happy condition of Christs followers, *Observe*, That it is an excellent and unspeakable happiness, an excellent condition, delightful and lovely, that Believers are to look for in heaven, when the tribulation shall be over: it is not only an outgate, but an excellent outgate. We cannot speak of it to you, only, (beside what was said of it, *vers. 9, 10.*) take a short view of what is said of it here, 1. For its place, It is here before the Throne of God, beholding Him, to have a place among them that stood by in Gods Temple: this is the first step of their happiness. 2. Their decoring, is, white robes and palms in their hands, as so many conquerours and triumphers. 3. Their company, God and Christ, Angels and Saints, meaned by the Elders. 4. Their work, is, to sing and praise chearfully. Again here further, it is set out in these properties, 1. It is a sinless happiness; no back-drawing from God will be there, but a doing of His will with delight, and without interruption or weariness night and day, that is, continually; for, there is no night there; it is a part of their glory and the first step of it, to be quit of sin; there they will not be put to pray, *Let thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven*, but there will be an actual doing of it so. 2. That day is coming, when there will be no more crying out under a body of death; the body of death will not then rebel, there will not be one law against another, not an inward man or mind and flesh, but perfect holiness, without a sinful defect: no reluctancy, no sin nor misery. 3. To do this in His Temple, is, to signifie their dignity and eminency, and the dignity and eminency of their service; they need no Priest now to go in to the most Holy; all are there admitted thus to minister. 4. The great object of their eternal blessedness, is, God; they enjoy Him fully, familiarly, and constantly, which is meaned by His dwelling with them; they are ever in His company, God and they in one house, and upon one Throne, and to have common society with Him, It is wonderful, and the height of all. 5. There is no sinless defect there, nor any cross either of infirmity or heat of persecution, no violence nor cry in these streets, no complaint of plundering or oppression, no sequestration, no quarterings there, no poverty, not a poor person among all that company, entry into heaven putteth a close to all these, none of them are admitted to follow a Believer further than the ports of the City; It must then certainly be good to be there. The Lamb His sweet company, and the enjoyment of Him, compleateth all; we hold both Grace and Glory of Him, we have a special relation to Him, He is in our own nature there, God-man in one Person, the greatest glimpse of the God-head will probably be attained in Him, and all tears will be wiped away; whatever may comfort a Believer, will be given; and what disquiets a Believer, will be removed. There are three things that disquiet a Believer, that will not be in heaven. 1. Sinning and interrupting of Gods service, and neither sin nor temptation will be there, no devils nor corrupt nature, flesh and blood enter not there. 2. The interruption of the sense of Gods favour, which is now but at starts, as He is pleased to let it out; but no interruption of favour there; as they serve Him day and night, so He dwelleth among them, the communion is constant. And, by the way, *Observe*, That an uninterrupted serving of God, and an uninterrupted communion with God and enjoying of Him go together. 3. Outward persecutions and wants, pinches and

straits, none of these do follow the Saints into heaven; and, in opposition to all these, they enjoy God in a most excellent way, and the company of the Lamb, and are feasted by living fountains of water; and if any thing be more delectable than another, they have it, and that in abundance, freshly flowing for ever.

*Use 1.* Long in a holy and warrantable way to share and have experience of this happy condition, and labour to entertain clearness of right and interest in it. 2. Back your longings with endeavours to be at it. It is to be feared that many of us, when we shall yield our breath and soul, do find that we have looked on Heaven as a story. 3. Mortifie your members which are upon the earth: what are all Idols when they are laid in the ballance for-against this happiness, in its highest degree with its soul-sweetning circumstances? What happiness so desirable as this? or, to be compared with the enjoying of God, wherein there is perfect holiness without sin, and complete happiness without stop or interruption? 4. Be comforting your selves from, and confirming your selves in the hope of this happiness; all ye who are fled to Christ for refuge: suppose ye be under tribulation now, there is a time coming when ye will get out of it: and though a body of death trouble you, and wants, oppression, poverty, hunger, nakedness, &c. keep you at under; yet, when ye come to Heaven, ye shall be troubled with none of these things; none are poor, but all are rich there; none are naked, but all are clothed with white robes; none are hungry, but all feasted and well fed: and suppose ye have a heartless time here, yet then there is no fear no sin, nor sorrow, nor cause, nor occasion of it.

The result of all this, is, to commend to you these two directions, 1. Seeing all this happiness cometh through washing in the Lambs blood, Think much of Believing, make that knot sure, it is that upon which Heaven hangeth; loose that knot, and Heaven will fall by from you. This carnal security that is among the most part of you is not believing; search and try your condition, make sure your calling and election, and seek to know that it is sure and out of question. 2. Seeing Heaven is such a happy life, and there is a resemblance of it here, aim at the beginning of it: and we will find something of it in these words, as they relate to the Church-militant, 1. By serving God, and by holiness, ceasing from sin. They that serve God most uninterruptedly, are likest Heaven; count it your happiness to be worshipping and serving God without intermission. The more spiritual, constant and immediate our service is, the more it is like Heaven; thus we enter in Gods rest, *Heb. 4. 10.* when we cease from our own works and do His. 2. To be enjoying Gods company, though not in that immediate way as in Heaven, yet by Faith in Him, and by His Spirit in us, and by the having our conversation life up to him, *Col. 3. 1, 2.* This is the earnest and first fruits of Glory, much nearness and communion with God maketh us like Heaven; the likest thing to it in the world, is, to dwell in Him and with Him. 3. To be in Christs Flock under His care and tutory, fed by Him, and led by Him, and feeding on Him, and yielding our selves up to Him. 4. A contentedness with our present condition and lot in the world, as He is pleased to carve it out to us, to learn in every estate to be content, *Philip. 4.* in the enjoying of God and Christs care of us. 5. Wainedness of affection from carnal and worldly delights, nor engaging in, nor thirsting after these. *Paul* opposeth a heavenly conversation to this, *Phil. 3. 19, 20.* In a word, study to reach a further length in holiness, and endeavour after a more full communion with God, and in all other things give him His will. There might be some more fore-taste of happiness had in these things. Lord make us serious in seeking after them.

## LECTURE I.

## CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. **A**ND when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

2. And I saw the seven Angels which stood before GOD, and to them were given seven trumpets.

3. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne.

4. And the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, out of the Angels hand.



**W**E have heard how under the former six seals the Lord hath been revealing and foreshewing the state of the Church here on earth till that first great change of bringing Christianity in request publicly, and making it to be owned and countenanced by authority in the world, by reason whereof, Idolaters and persecutors should be disowned and discountenanced; so far the sixth seal came to foreshew and hold out the shaking and overturning of that Idolatrous world, and bringing horror and trembling on persecutors; before he came to prosecute the opening of the seventh seal (which bringeth the history of the Church that continueth to the end of the world in two periods, one, of the trumpets, another of the vials) he hinted in the former Chapter at this sad storm which was coming on the Church from all airts, and at our Lords stepping in to hold these winds from breaking loose till he had sealed a number that he was to preserve from being carried away with the errors of the time.

In this Chapter, and the three following, is contained the third vision, or second general prophesie of this Book, to wit, the vision of the trumpets: and because (as we said before in laying down the series of the story at our entry to Chap. 6.) the seventh trumpet bringeth in the last plagues of the seven vials, as the seventh seal bringeth in the trumpets, therefore we comprehend the second prophesie under the first six trumpets, which reacheth from the beginning of this Chapter to the 15. ver. of Chap. 11. when the seventh trumpet soundeth.

This prophesie or vision, hath three parts, The first is preparatory, to the seventh verse of this Chapter. The second is executory, or the main body of the prophetick vision, to the end of the ninth Chapter. The third is explicatory of, and consolatory against the two last great woes in the ninth Chapter, especially during the second unto which it is contemporary, as appeareth, ver. 14. Chap. 11. when it is said the second wo is past, Then, and not till then, including all the former events, since the trumpet sounded, as belonging to that time, and contemporary, at least, with these woes.

Before we enter particularly on the words, he advertised concerning these four things to be adverted to therein. The first, is concerning the connexion of this prophesie with the sixth seal, in the close of the sixth Chapter; for, although the seventh Chapter intervene; yet, the series of the story leadeth us to joyne the seventh seal after the sixth, as the sixth was after

the fifth, &c. Now, the sixth seal taking its beginning in Constantine's time, and taking in the overthrow then given to the persecutors of the Christians, and the change which was made in the Christian world, where the first period closed, it will be about the three hundredth and tenth year of Christ, or a little after, taking in the peace that for a time the Church enjoyed then, whereby we may the more easily count the beginning and the rise of these trumpets, and the evils prognosticated by them, to be the next ensuing evils after that interval of peace, or during the time thereof, seeing the interval is not long, as appeareth from Christs cry, Chap. 7. 2. 2. The second thing to be adverted to is, the issue, or close of these six trumpets; which is clear Chap. 11. 14. compared with 15. to be at the close of the second wo, at the blowing of the seventh trumpet, which bringeth in the last wo and seven vials whereby Antichrists Kingdom is overthrown, the everlasting Gospel preached through the world, and Nations that were not Christs before, now become his; which clearly is at the time of Antichrists greatness so bringing him to this height, and the Church low till the seventh Angel founded, that bringeth the vials; the first whereof, is poured out upon these who have his mark, Chap. 16. which fall of Antichrist, according to ordinary computation, beginneth, Anno 1517. when Luther first preached the Gospel, or Anno 1559. when the liberty of the profession thereof was first confirmed; whereof we shall say more, Chap. 11. This only pointeth out the period to be at the fall of Antichrists absolute tyranny. 3. The third thing is, the contemporariness of these trumpets with the beasts rising, Chap. 13. which belonging to one time, as appeareth by what precedeth and succeedeth to both, and speaking also the same judgement, as appeareth by this, that the same thing, to wit, Gods sealing protecteth from both, and the same persons are hurt by both, to wit, these who were not sealed: therefore a special respect must be had of clearing one of them by the other, and making one of them agree with the other. 4. A fourth thing is, That we conceive the storm spoken of in the former Chapter by the Angels holding the four winds, to be the same mentioned in the trumpets. For, 1. if this seventh seal be knit to the sixth, Then it comprehendeth this, mentioned in the seventh Chapter, which was but by way of digression hinted at in the sixth, the better to prepare for a full view of it afterward: for that storm must belong to the seventh seal or the sixth; but not the sixth, which described an event of an other nature, and on an other object, to wit, the Churches enemies: Therefore it must belong to the



seventh; which hath two prophecies, of distinct natures, to wit, *trumpets* and *vials*, answerable to the two different parts of that seventh Chapter. 2. That storm was foreseen there, and restrained; but here, it is executed. 3. It was then kept up till the Elect should be sealed against it, and under the trumpets (*Chap. 9. 4.*) they are found sealed and safe: which cleareth, that this is a spiritual ill threatened against formal and hypocritical professors, which these trumpets bring; yea, the same with that in *Chap. 7.*

The connexion then is thus, That, after *John* saw the Church freed from open persecutions, and the persecuters cast down, he saw Heresies and Errors ready to break in from all quarters on the Church; yet, through Christs care, a little breaching time was given; they are commanded to sit till His people were provided for: now, this being done, *John* goeth on in shewing what came when these winds were let loose; yet he casteth in a word before, to *vers. 7.* to shew they came not precipitantly, but as they had orders from Him who had laid the restraint on them, which is cleared in three or four circumstances of preparation.

We shall shortly go through the words more particularly. When he had opened the seventh seal: He, that is, the Lamb, who had opened six seals before, openeth now the seventh; which seventh, though divided in two periods afterward, by distinguishing the vials from the trumpets, Yet it comprehendeth both. Therefore, *Chap. 7.* a view of both shortly was given together. The effects that this bringeth with it, are a little suspended and some general preparatory circumstances premittid, to shew it was some strange thing which was coming.

The first thing which occurreth, *There was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.* This is not so much the effect (for, that followeth) as that which accompanieth it, and a definit time is put for an indefinite, It is a very short while. To clear it more fully, understand *heaven* here of the visible Militant Church; it is that Church whose state is here described, and there can be interruptions of noise and silence in no other heaven; so it implieth, that at this time, after persecuters were down, and the winds that were ready to blow, kept in, there was a great quietness and peace in the Church for a little short time; which indeed was true for some years in *Constantin's* days, betwixt persecuters ceasing, and the Schisms and Heresies of the *Donatists* and *Arians* arising, which was but a very short time; and this is not inconsistent with the scope, as if he had said, I saw peace a while till all was made ready for the ensuing blast and storm, which is in the words following, and till fundamental truths were confirmed publicly, for keeping the Lords people from the snares of these gross Heresies, which then immediately followed. Whence *Observe*, That the Churches outward peace is not long; she hath but a short time of it, half an hours silence only. The Church-story, Scripture, and experience prove this. Therefore, 1. Folks would not promise to themselves nor expect long peace. 2. They would improve the little time they have frugally, and not mispend it; an hour, or half an hours time in peace in the Family, or Congregation, is a rich mercy, and we know not how long we have it; few Churches have had so long peace as we have had in this Island. Therefore see it be improv'd well. 2. This half hour being a definit time, put for an indefinite, sheweth that that rule holdeth not in the Revelation, that whole compleat times, as hours, years, &c. may be definit for indefinite, but not so broken times, as half days, half years and half hours, &c. for, no particular definite time can be rationally imagined to be understood by this.

Or, 2. understand *Heaven* here, for that heaven, where all these things were represented to *John*: silence in it, importeth a new transition to a strange matter, that for the stupendiousness and admirableness thereof, arrested the attention and

made all keep silence, as taken up with expectation of what might be revealed, a little *interim* of time being between the opening of the seal, and the appearing of any thing: which suspension of the Angels out-coming with their trumpets, confirmeth the first exposition, as if this prophesie began with a little quietness; and the latter, is not to be slighted, because this exposition holdeth out a preparation and attentiveness requisite in us for hearing and receiving such mysteries.

The second circumstance, is, *vers. 2.* When all do wait what the opening of this seal shall produce, something appeareth that prognosticateth a coming storm: *Seven Angels are seen standing before God, and they get seven trumpets.* The use of the trumpets and number, I shall forbear to speak much of them, and what these Angels are, till I come to *vers. 6.* Only here, we conceive them to be Angels that wait for Gods command, it may be, special Angels for eminency, there being degrees among Angels; Or, the words may be read without the relative *the*, as differencing them, or relating to any other, which we find not before. These are the instruments, *Angels*, they are made use of to give the alarm. 2. Their weapons or furniture, is, *trumpets*, to incite others rather than to act themselves. *Trumpets* had a twofold use, 1. To give an advertisement of some imminent assault, sounding an alarm; so it relateth to Gods people, to stir them up to watchfulness and to be on their guard: *1 Cor. 14.* *If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battel?* 2. To call the Congregation, or Assembly, or Host, for acting or attempting something; and so it looketh to offending, relating to the letting loose of enemies, as the former to defence, in guarding His people: however, they imply Gods giving special orders. In these cases, Angels are ministring Spirits, waiting on God for a commission, Therefore the trumpets are given them, to shew they are but Ministers and Servants in what is commanded them, and do by orders. 3. They are *seven*, though there were but four, *Chap. 7.* because these kepted all airts, that the winds should not blow, till they were let loose: these seven do proportion the out-letting of these winds by steps and degrees; and this is done out of the Lords goodness, that letteth not all blow at once but one by one, that men may have warning and be armed for what cometh after.

A third and main circumstance followeth, *v. 3, 4, 5.* Though now the seal be opened, and trumpets be given to the Angels, yet these Angels are not yet to sound till orders be given, which is not till Christs intercession intervene. His intercession (as it is set down here) hath two parts, 1. His intercession for His people, *v. 3.* and 4. in reference to the coming storm, that God would not impute sin to them, nor suffer them to be led away with Error, as *Luke 22. 31, 32.* *Satan hath sought to winnow you, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.* The second part of His intercession, is, in reference to His enemies; and it is a denunciation against the ungodly world and that profane generation that received Him not, *vers. 5.* it is a piece of His absoluteness, commissioning the Angels to go on and execute judgment; therefore it is said, (*vers. 5.*) *The Angel took the censers, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, &c.* and then the sounding of the Angels followeth: for, as He had given charge before to the four Angels, *Chap. 7.* not to hurt the earth till His Servants were sealed; so here He giveth charge and commission to these seven Angels to go on when His Elect are secured.

There is here an allusion to the high Priest under the Law, and Christs brought in, using these ceremonies that the high Priest used when he went into the Temple and Sanctuary: so we take it for granted, that this is Christ and no other, that cometh and standeth at the altar with a golden censer, &c. 1. Because of His work; for, none can claim to this Office but

but Christ alone, to offer up the prayers of all Saints. 2. Because of the efficacy or effect of this His offering-up prayers; it was effectual both for His peoples being accepted of God, *vers.* 4. and also against enemies in being terrible to them; yea, it was not the prayers of themselves, but the incense which was offered with them that made them acceptable; which can be no other thing but Christs sacrifice. 3. Because all the ceremonies here used have reference to the high Priest, and there being no high Priest for the time but Christ, He who was the antitype being come, and that leuitical service being abolished, it must needs be He. And though it be said *incense was given Him*, which Christ hath of His own, (which maketh some expound the words otherwise) it militateeth nothing against it. For, 1. Christs whole Office is given Him as Mediator, and His qualifications for it. 2. He is here speaking in the terms agreeing to an high Priest on earth, as to have an altar, censer, &c. all which are not literally to be understood of Christ; for, there is no altar nor incense in heaven, but as such may be figuratively applied to Him as the antitype signified by the high Priest; for, none other was typified by these Priests intercessions, but Christ who was Priest, Sacrifice, and Altar: and all the Spiritual things of the Gospel, are spoken of under the types and terms of the Old Testament.

Without insisting further in needless mysteries, the scope of this intercession and the interposing of it between the opening of the seal and sounding of the trumpets, we conceive, is, to hold out these things, which are Doctrines.

1. Christs care of His Church and Saints, that, while there is a coming storm to blow on the world, and a hypocritical generation to be plagued, He steppeth in and intercedeth for them; in coming trials and storms, He is ever mindful to pray for them, that they be not hurt by them: and we conceive it is for this end brought in here, to let the Church and all see the care of the Mediator, His compassionateness and sympathy, and that He is as careful for preventing their sin, as for preventing their hurt and judgment; now in heaven, as tender as when He was on earth, *Luk. 22. 32.* 2. It is supposed here, that a time of trouble is a special time of praying; then all Saints pray, there is no standing in a trial without praying: Or, praying is a special duty or mean of defence for a trial, the prayers of all Saints are spoken of here; which in many places, are compared to Incense and Sacrifice, *Psal. 141. 1. Hos. 14. &c.* Yea, that all Saints pray here, it sheweth, they deserve not that name who pray not, especially in difficult times, when a storm is come or coming on the Church; there is no Saint, but He is a praying Saint, especially at such a time, and these Christ offereth to the Father, though with His own incense; it is made the mark of a Godly man, *Psal. 32. 6. For this shall every one that is Godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou mayest be found;* and it is made the mark of an atheist, that he calleth not upon God, *Psal. 14.* This is clearly holden forth here. 3. That there is no efficacy in the prayers of all the Saints without Christs intercession; they are offered by Him, the sacrifice is laid down before Him, *By Him we come to God, Heb. 7. 25. and 13. 15.* He is the high Priest, who only can enter the most Holy, and through whom we have access to God; there is no prayer acceptable to God as it is offered up by us, but as it is put in His hand, in His censer only it is acceptable: for, there are defects in the prayers of all Saints; the most holy Saint is faulty, and hath need of a Mediator to make his peace, and

preserve it, and to present his prayers: both the persons and the prayers must be accepted through Him, and whatever we expect as the return of our prayer, it must be expected upon account of His satisfaction, and on no other ground; and nothing must be suffered to stick to our prayers of the conceit of our worth, or of the worth of our prayers. This is much acknowledged, but as much slighted; and most pray, as if access were to be had another way, and without being sensible of the defects of, and guilt that is in their prayers. 4. That Christ offereth and perfumeth all the Saints prayers less or more. There is no prayer in no Saint that He refuseth, whether they be weak or strong, whether they be faint or more fervent, with less or more spirit and life in them, whether shorter or longer, well ordered or confused, if they come from Saints, be warranted in the Word, and grounded on the promise and put up in His name, they are by Him offered, All go in one censer, and all go up as the smoke of sweet incense, and through Him are accepted of God; He taketh the least sigh, and putteth it in His censer, and it hath a good savour to God out of His hand, He refuseth no Saints prayer, nor sendeth it back unanswered: Whatsoever ye ask in My name I will do it, *Joh. 16. 23.* and the Father heareth Him alwayes, *Joh. 11. 42.* What an encouragement and direction how to pray is this? and a comfort in praying? 1. That our blessed Mediator receiveth the prayer and putteth it in His censer, putteth incense with it, that it ascendeth not alone but in His name, by vertue of His right and in His blood it appeareth; many right carnal poor feckless prayers are savoury to God on this account, and none upon another; He is our days-man, this should encourage us. 2. It directeth us to imploy Christ in our prayers, which is to have respect to His sufferings, and satisfaction and intercession allanerly, both in making the prayers acceptable, and in our expecting the return of what is asked without respecting our selves or our prayers, except as beloved and acceptable in Him. 3. It is matter of consolation in and after prayer, and ground of quietness, that how-ever our prayers be not much worth, yet Christs incense maketh them savoury. This, being well considered, would teach us to make more conscience of praying than anxiously to dispute whether we be heard or no. 5. There is an excellent conjunction here between the Saints praying and Christs interceding as being both useful and necessary to the obtaining of the Believers point. Their prayers and His incense go well together, as if none of them were profitable without the other, at least for a conscience to quiet it self: a praying man may expect a benefit by Christs intercession while he improveth it, which one that prayeth not, cannot expect; both are necessary, but not in a meritorious way; the merit cometh alone from Christ, but both are called-for in the command, and in the promise God hath knit them together. It is true, God is sometimes found of them that seek Him not, which is His own Sovereign way; but when we look to the promises, and the ground of our expectation, we will find them all qualified with seeking, *Ezek. 36. 37. Notwithstanding I will be enquired of by the house of Israel for all these things.* Let all these be joyned together, and separate not what God hath conjoynd; seeing He hath bidden us pray, and pray in Christs name, Follow that way and order: for, these who either pray none, or pray not in His name, cannot expect a hearing; these are knit together as well as His satisfaction, and our faith.



## Concerning Christ's Intercession.

**T**Here is no piece of the fulness of our blessed Lord Jesus that is more rich in consolation than His intercession is; and yet it is often suffered to lye beside even the Believer, not being emproven to the excellent use which doth flow from it, as if there were no such treasure therein; seeing therefore there is so fair an occasion in the first part of this Chapter to speak thereof, we may essay it a little in His strength: not as if we could unfold this mystery and satisfie curiosity therein, nor yet as if we were to debate speculative questions that are raised concerning the same, intending only to lay open the practical part, as it tendereth to the Believers consolation. We shall therefore endeavour shortly to speak to these points, 1. in general, to what intercession importeth. 2. How our Lord Jesus may be conceived now to execute this office in Heaven. 3. If our Lord was intercessor before His incarnation. 4. What is the consolation that doth flow therefrom, and wherein it doth consist. Lastly, How this consolation ought, and may be improved by a Believer.

To the first, we conceive there are four expressions in Scripture, which being put together, serve much to illustrate this of intercession. The first, is that, (1 Tim. 2. 5.) where Christ is called the *Mediator*, or Mid-man, betwixt God and man; in which place, express respect is had to the making of our prayers acceptable before God. Now, this word *Mediator*, doth import these two, 1. A suitableness in the person interposing, to both the different parties, so that he cannot be said to be stated on either side. 2. It importeth a work and office, that is, to trye betwixt these two parties, that the prayer and petition of the one may by His Mediation find favour before the other; thus is the phrase so frequent, of our coming to God by Him. The second word is the same of *Intercession*, or *Intercessor*; which doth indeed import a guilt on their part, who are interceded for; yet doth imply also the interposing of a worthy party to intercede for such persons and to deprecate wrath, and that upon His own account, without respect to what is in them. Upon this ground (Rom. 8. 34.) a defiance is given to all accusations, because Christ Jesus maketh intercession. The third word, is, that He is called (1 Joh. 2. vers. 1.) an *Advocate*; if any man sin, we have an *Advocate*; which looketh to Christs undertaking the cause of the Believer, even in a Legal and Judicial way, and to make it out in way of Justice, whereas the former word of intercession, of it self doth look more like a friendly intreaty. This title *Advocate*, importeth His undertaking of their cause, and that not onely to solist it, but to plead it; yea, and by office to do so. A fourth expression, is, (Heb. 9. vers. 24.) where it is said, Christ hath entered into Heaven, there to appear before God for us, which is yet more than the former, because this sheweth the purpose of His entry, which is, as it were, to be Agent or Solicitor, waiting on and that in our name to answer and vindicate any thing that is imputed to us; or, as an Ambassador that sustaineth the room of such before God; and so His appearing for us, having the perfect commemoration of His by-past death, cannot but effectually answer for, and vindicate all in whose name He appeareth.

If it be asked, in the second place, how may our blessed Lord Jesus be conceived to go about this work of interceding or advocating for sinners? It will not be enough to say, that His merit and sufferings, do continue to deserve such things, as if His pleading were onely the vertue of His merit, which figuratively might be said to plead for good to His people, as *Abel's* blood is said to plead the contrary to *Cain*, even after his death. This is indeed true; for (Heb. 12. vers. 24.) the blood of sprink-

ling doth yet speak, and that far better things than the blood of *Abel*; but this doth not constitute His Intercession to be any part of His Office, but doth rather overturn the same.

Neither is it to be thought, that He intercedeth with such gesture and verbal expression, as men use with men, or as He Himself did in the days of His flesh, when He offered up prayers with strong crys and tears, which did become the state of His humiliation, but not of His glorification. Though this be a mystery, yet we may humbly and soberly conceive it in these particulars,

First, There is in this intercession a sympathy, and fellow-feeling in our Lord; which is the very great ground of this intercession. For, Jesus Christ, though glorified, is yet true Man, having the real and true properties of the humane nature, which make Him capable to be in another way affected with our afflictions and griefs than formerly; yea, not only so, but He was in His own Person a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and learned obedience by what He suffered, whereby not only is He man to sympathize with us simply as a man, but He is a man experimentally acquainted with grief, and for that end that He might be the more fit and able to succour these that should be in such a case, Heb. 2. vers. 17, 18. and 4. vers. 15, 16. Again, our blessed Lord Jesus, being God and Man in one person, by vertue of His God-head, He cannot be ignorant of the least affliction of His people; and by vertue of His Man-head, personally united to His God-head, He cannot but be affected therewith, especially considering His being taught by experience, for this very end, that He might be a compassionate high Priest, and the sooner touched with the infirmities of others: Now, this sympathy doth not only rise from the bare speculative knowledge which He hath of the afflictions of others, but it is awakened and entertained by that union of the Spirit betwixt the Head and the Members, whereby they become one, so that he that persecuteth the one, persecuteth the other, as is frequently asserted in the Scripture. From all this, there doth arise, in the Mediator so considered, an inclination, and (to say so) a natural propensness to have these evils redressed, so that He cannot but desire the removing thereof: and this His desire, being of great weight before God, may be well counted intercession.

Secondly, This Intercession of His, may be conceived to consist in His appearing in Heaven in our name: whereby the Son of God, being now Man, listeth Himself as ready to make appearance for such and such sinners, So His very being in our nature there, speaketh His purpose in reference to this end, and Gods accepting of it according to appointment.

Thirdly, it may be conceived to take along with it His declared willingness to have such and such prayers granted, &c. This was a part of His Intercession, John 17. 24. *Father, I will that these thou hast given me be with me, &c.* where His declaring that to be His will, is a prime part of His Intercession: now, it cannot be thought but that He hath a will to have the same things executed, which were engaged to Him, and these particulars, which the necessities of His people shall call for from Him, granted; and that the Mediator should will such a particular for such a person, and, in an unconceivable way of His adoring the Father, present the same before Him, is no little part of His Intercession.

Fourthly, In all this, there is an holy and reverend (though inconceivable) adoration, whereby the Mediator, now at the Fathers right hand (and being, in that respect, less than the Father) doth in all His appearances for us, as being the head of the body, adore the Sovereignty, Goodnesse, Wis-

Wisdom, &c. of God, with a respect to the Covenant of Redemption: his saying to his disciples oftner than once, *I will pray the Father for you*, doth imply (to say so,) some address to God, though we cannot conceive the manner thereof, even in reference to some particular persons, and some particular cases; and he being set at the right hand of Majesty, cannot but adore that sovereign Majesty.

There are some other words in Scripture, which seem to import something in reference to this intercession, as that, *Heb. 10. ver. 13. He is expecting till his enemies be made his footstool*, and that he may seem to be longing to have his body perfected, which is his fulness, and that in his prayer, *Joh. 17. Father I will that these that are given me may be where I am, &c.* where he may seem to be longing to have his body perfected; which desire, certainly he hath not yet laid down: But these and others may be reduced to some of the former branches, therefore we shall propose no more.

It will be some difficulty to clear, if Christ, before his Incarnation, did execute this part of his Office, and with what difference he doth it now. The Scriptures indeed of the New Testament do speak of Christs intercession, as not only posterior to his Incarnation, but also to the whole state of his humiliation; which is often spoken of as that which doth qualify and fit him for this office; yea, the Scriptures do ever presuppose his Resurrection and Ascension; yet as it cannot be denied that Christ was intercessor on earth, though he was not in the forementioned manner appearing in heaven; so it cannot be denied, that Christ did execute this office before His being man; for, he was Mediator, King, Priest, and Prophet before his Incarnation; neither can any warrantably say, that Believers then did want this consolation; and in Scripture we will find some grounds bearing forth all the essentials of intercession, as first, in that parable of the Wine-dressers interceding with the Master, *Luk. 13.* we have the Mediators reverend interposing represented to us, and that before his Incarnation; beside, what is holden forth by the typical services, as praying towards the holy Temple, the holy Oracle, the high Priests making intercession as well as offering sacrifice, and such like, do evidence, that respect is had to Christs Intercession. Secondly, We will find his sympathy and being affected with the condition of his People: that is a great word, *Isa. 63. vers. 9. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and in his love and pity he redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them all the dayes of old*: This speaketh a sympathy, flowing from a Covenant-relation, even before he was Incarnate. Again, *Prov. 8. ver. 31.* He speaketh of his delight and rejoycing in the Habitable parts of the earth, that is, in these that were given him, and even in the places in a manner where they were to reside, which sympathy seemeth to flow from the very appointment of him to be Head to such a number. Thirdly, He being then Mediator, could not but be Advocate, and have his judicial appearances (to say so) for his People, there being no less need then than now. Fourthly, As what concerneth his willingness to have his People well in that time, cannot be denied from that one place of *Isaiah* just now cited, so neither can his intercession be denied.

If it be asked, where the difference lyeth? We answer, especially in these three or four, First, in the ground of the intercession: it was then done in virtue of the sacrifice to be offered: now it is performed by, and grounded upon, the virtue of the satisfaction that is already given and finished upon the cross. Secondly, there is a difference in respect of the blessed Intercessor, who, being then God, hath now taken a new relation to Him, by assuming our nature in one person to his Divine Nature; whereby he is not only capable in a more suitable way to sympathize, but actually hath submitted himself to suffer, for this very end, as was formerly hinted. So that though he cannot

have larger bowels than formerly he had; yet hath he now a new experimental way of being affected with our griefs, and of being provoked to heal the same. Thirdly, there followeth a difference in his manner of interceding, which is now done in our nature, for in it he appeareth before God; also touches of our ills, and his sympathy with us, are more suitable to our nature, and do more experimentally impress and affect him now before. Lastly, There is this difference, that though before there was consolation to his people from his intercession; yet it is much more now, and therefore it is so often and fully insisted on in the New Testament, beside what was hinted, that then his sympathy flowed from his deputation & appointment, but now from his humane nature and experience thereof.

To come then to speak of that consolation and the grounds thereof, There is need here of a spirit dipped therein for fitting to conceive and speak aright thereof: However, that it cannot but be ground of great consolation, may appear from these considerations.

First, From the consideration of the blessed Intercessor himself, whom we may look upon as the Fathers fellow and equal, who, though condescending to take on him the place of a Mediator or Mid-person, yet, is *He the brightness of the Fathers glory, and the express image of his person, Heb. 1.* And this excellency of the person, cannot but be comfortable to the poor base sinner. Again, we may consider him as man, and so as our Brother; yea, as an afflicted man acquainted with griefs and tempted; and so we may conceive him as our Physician, who hath not only learned (to say so) some skill in an experimental way, how to guide these that are tempted or afflicted; but also as fitted with the more sympathie, affection, and tenderness, to improve that skill for their good. Hence, (*Heb. 2. 18.*) He is said to be able to succor them that are tempted, he himself having been tempted in all things, yet without sin: where his being tempted, is supposed to be a furnishing with excellent lent abilities tenderly to supply and succour such as may be in the like case: The same also may be gathered from *Heb. 4. 15, 16.* Now, he who is thus diversly considered, being yet but one person, what more can be imagined for comfort? for, though he be high, yet have sinners access to him; and though he be man for emboldning them to approach to him, yet being God-man, he is able to stand before Justice and plead, when no meer creature durst appear.

Secondly, We may consider the grounds of this office and the ends thereof: to speak with reverence of our blessed Lord Jesus, it is nothing that is occasional or accidental; but it doth flow from the Fathers appointment, who hath constituted him, and that by oath, to be a Priest for ever, *Psal. 110.* and for this end doth he sustain this Office and live for ever, that he may save to the uttermost all that come to God by him, *Heb. 7. 25.* Now, that this intercession is a thing of old determined in the counsel of God; and that it was determined for this end, that sinners who were banished from Gods presence might again have access and find grace to help in the time of need, *Hebrews 4. ver. 16.* and *10. 19, &c.* this cannot but be exceeding comfortable.

Thirdly, we may consider the comfort of this intercession in respect of the extent and reach thereof: which we may point at in these four, First, in reference to all cases; it is a great word (*Isa. 63. in all their afflictions he was afflicted, &c.* and this was even in the dayes of old before the Word was made flesh; and therefore it must be conceived to be much more fresh and lively in so far as concerneth that sympathy which the humane nature hath with it. Secondly, This extent appeareth in respect of persons; for, all that will make use of Christ and come to God, are admitted; neither was there ever a sinner that offered to make use of Christ in approaching to God, or sought to have peace with God through that mids, but this inter-



intercession did bear Him through, as that great word is, *Heb. 7. 25. He is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him, seeing he liveth for ever to make intercession for them.* And if men will not make use of Christ, they do in this forsake their own mercy. Thirdly, The reach of this consolation may be considered as to the degree; it is a perfect salvation that cometh by this intercession; it is from every evil, and that to the uttermost, so that more cannot be imagined, as that same word is, *Heb. 7. 25. He saveth to the uttermost, or unto perfection.* Fourthly, its extent may be looked to in respect of the parties against whom Christ intercedeth. There is no party but this doth give a dash unto it, whether devil, challenge, temptation, or what else; upon this the triumph proceedeth, *Rom. 8. 33, 34. &c. who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect?* which is a defying word to all: and these are the grounds, *it is God that justifieth; it is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, sitting at the right hand of God,* where this of making intercession doth the triumphal defiance given by the Apostle. All which, being put together, can it be but comfortable, that there is such a compleat delivery whether from sin or misery, and that of whatsoever sort?

Fourthly, The consolation of this intercession may be considered in respect of its efficacy: for, as Christ can refuse no cause put on him, but must interceed, being employed; so he cannot but be heard always, as he said himself, *Joh. 11.* and so his promise is, *what ever ye ask in my name, it shall be done unto you, Joh. 14. vers. 13, 14.* yea what ever ye ask in my name, I will do it: where the intercessor being the executor of what he pleadeth for, it cannot be but comfortable, and it is suitable to the terms of the Covenant it should be so.

Fifthly, We may consider the Sovereignty and freeness of this intercession, which tendeth not a little to the consolation of Gods people: for, in the exercise thereof, our blessed Lord Jesus hath not tied himself to wait on our prayers, or on our fight and sense of, or weightiness with, our own evils either of sin or misery, but often his way appeareth to be very gracious & sovereignly condescending, that he answereth before we call, *1a. 65. ver. 24.* and that he interposeth, even when we are like fruitless trees troubling the ground, *Luk. 13.* and when we are secure, not minding the snares the devil is laying for us, as *Luk. 22. 32.* he prayeth for Peter that his faith fail not, he in the mean time not knowing any such snare. Hence in the Scripture, grace is exalted, and sinners are invited to come with boldness thereunto, upon this ground of Christs intercession as much as any: so (*Heb. 4.*) when the compassionateness of this high Priest hath been spoken to, this conclusion is drawn from it, *Let us therefore approach with boldness unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in the time of need:* here grace hath a throne; and he that seeketh upon this account, may expect to find mercy and grace as that which aboundeth most under this Dominion and about this Throne. It is from this ground of his intercession, that so many evils are prevented and kept back from the people of God, which have even been at their door: and were the mercies which we obtain, and that without any direct petitioning of the Lord for them, and the many evils which we are liable to, and might and would come, if the Lord prevented not, we our selves in the mean time being but little watchful to have them prevented: were these (I say) considered how much? O how very much would we find our selves obliged to the intercessour from whom his people have all these? yea, if we will consider this freeness more nearly, we will find, that this intercession and sympathy is not broken off and made less because of the Believers sin; but is in some respect the more stirred and provoked, because this sympathy floweth from the relation that is betwixt Head and members, which sin doth not cut off; and it is as with a tender natural parent, who cannot but be affected with the childs straits, even

though he hath shamefully brought them on himself; yea, his very failings do touch and affect: so our high Priests sympathy, is not only in crosses; but it is to have pity on the ignorant, and compassion on these that are out of the way, *Heb. 5.* and thus the very sin of a Believer affecteth him so, that he cannot but sympathize and be provoked to sympathize with him.

O what a wonder is this, the more sin, the more sympathy! which ought to make Believers humble, and yet exceedingly to comfort them under a sinful condition; for it is written, *if any man sin, we have an advocate, 1 John 2. 1.* whereby, in some singular manner, Christs intercession is suited unto, appointed and designed for sinners.

The last thing wherein we shall consider the consolation of this intercession, is the sympathy from whence it floweth, and which it carrieth it along with it; This is a main ground of consolation, which doth sweeten all the rest.

We may consider this humane sympathy, either as it giveth a ground of consolation to us, or as it doth some way make us more capable to conceive of the consolation that doth flow from the consideration of the bowels of Jesus; both which tend to our actual comfort.

That there is an humane sympathy in the Man-Christ with the Believer, cannot be denied, the Scriptures (whereof some passages have been cited) are so clear: only we shall give some properties thereof, for helping to understand the same so far as we can reach,

First then, we say, it is a real and humane sympathy: when we say it is real, it doth not only import, that he knoweth the afflictions of his people, nor only that he mindeth help to them, which two do agree to the Lord J E H O V A H; but it importeth a sensible, native, and (to say so) a natural touch of these evils; for, He is not one, that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, *Heb. 4.* This is as one brother is affected with the straits of another, especially straits that himself hath formerly felt; this must needs be asserted as true, which followeth the reality of Christs Man-head, who, as such, cannot but be supposed to have what properties are belonging to a man.

I called it humane sympathy, to distinguish it from that figurative sympathy which was applicable to him before his Incarnation. This sympathy is really for kind such as one friend hath to another, a father or mother to their children, as frequent expressions in Scripture do hold forth; and it is the believing of the reality of this humane sympathy, that openeth the door to all the following consolations, to wit, that our Lord Jesus hath a humane heart stirred and affected in that same manner, (yet unconceivably holy) as ours are towards our friends, and children in their necessities: and though Christ be glorified, yet ceaseth he not to be true man, and so not to want this sympathy.

Secondly, This sympathy is sinless in him, it hath much muddiness and byasse in us; yea, through sin it is much obstructed and cooled, so that selfishness drowneth much of this, or miscarieth it in the exercise thereof; but with our Lord Jesus it is not so, he is every way pure, who knew no sin, nor was capable to be tempted therewith: Therefore his sympathy must be the more excellent, in that it cannot mistake, or miscarry in reference to any object it shall have occasion to act upon.

Thirdly, his sympathy is perfect: and though while he was on earth, there was a purity beyond what we can conceive; yet, being now exalted to Glory, even in his humane nature as all, that is in him, so his sympathy and bowels, must be much more shining and glorious, as being now at the height of all the perfections that may make a true man in the most excellent manner to sympathize with others. Therefore if we would conceive

conceive the earning of bowels or sympathie of a hundred natural fathers or mothers towards their children in difficulties, yet all is nothing to this of our exalted Prince and Lord Jesus Christ, whose affections stir Him, though more Inconceivably, yet with more tendernes, faithfulness and dear respect to the good of His people.

Fourthly, This sympathie is the sympathie of a man, who is God and man in one Person, having both Natures personally united; and what can be more for consolation and for the commending of this to Believers? for so His qualifications cannot be but at the height of perfection; So there can be nothing hid from Him, and He will not fail to be touched with their necessities; and which is wonderful comfort, He is touched with them & sympathizeth whether they themselves be touched with them or not, whether they know them or not, or whether they make addresse to Him or not, even as a tender mother will be affected with her child's hazard, though it doth not complain. And by this, the Believer hath not only affections to be warmed by the consideration of Christs sympathie, and humane bowels; but also hath a ground to stay his faith in dying in these, and comforting himself in these, because they are bowels of a Person who may be listened to, and rested upon, as no meer man can be.

Lastly, This sympathie of the humane nature Man-christ, is agreeable unto His divine will; for, though there be two Natures, yet there is but one Person; and though He hath different wills, yet He cannot have opposite wills; and therefore what He may be conceived in His will and pity to will to us as man, that same must be conceived to be made effectual to us as He is God, which is the conclusion of this consolation.

Again, we said, this humane sympathie may be considered as it putteth us in a capacity to conceive of the consolation that cometh by Him; for, the more Spiritual an object be, the lesse do we conceive of it, and when the Scripture speaketh of the Lords bowels and sympathie, that is not easily reached or conceived: but when we have the bowels, or sympathie, of a true man spoken of, we are more able to reach that and know what it is, and so are more ready to be affected with the consolation that suitech so with us: we conceive it is no little part of the Believers consolation, that in Gods condescension, this sympathie is so moulded as to keep still the properties of the human nature: now, the Believer hath Him as it were His brother, that sucked the breasts of his mother; now he hath Him as his friend, having the same affections and qualifications that he himself hath, yet sinlesse; now he may sometimes gather from his own affections within himself, the earning of the bowels of Christ or a resemblance of what is in Him, and may conclude, O what vast bowels and sympathie must be in Him! and yet all this is but a poor hint of the excellent and strong consolation that this part of our Lords Priest-hood furnisheth. What must Jesus be, when known and possessed? and what might His people be in the triumph of a comfortable life, if the breasts of those consolations were sucked by them?

The last thing to be spoken to, is, how this consolation is to be improved by Believers? and though this be the main use of all, yet how great difficulty is it to get hearts up seriously to be in love therewith, and to be longing to be made dexterous in the improving of it? The truth is, except that One Spirit touch our hearts with some impression of that sympathie, and kindle something in us, it will want its native lustre.

The first general that we would propose, is, that men would study to know the fulness that is in Jesus, and that they would consider the high Priest of our profession, *Heb. 3. 1.* and endeavour to be acquainted with His excellencie; and in particular,

with this, that so there may be a throughnesse in the faith of these truths, whereof I fear there be too much ignorance and unbelief in the visible Church. O that men were truly convinced, that Christ hath such an Office, and that now as man He doth with a humane sympathie perform the same! I suppose there are even many, not amongst the worst, who yet all their dayes have been without the benefit of this, because they have never known Him, nor considered what use should be made of, and what benefit doth flow from the Mediators being Man, but do still carry in every thing, without respect thereto; and it is like, that even many very gracious souls have but little Spiritual skill and dexterity in this matter.

Secondly, In our addresses to God, Faith would be exercised on Jesus Christ, even in respect to this part of His Office, that is, that as there is a resting by Faith on Christs satisfaction, for attaining of pardon or what else is needful; so there ought to be a resting on Christ as intercessor, for the obtaining of what we are petitioning for before the Throne. This putteth the obtaining of what we seek off our selves, and giveth the credit and glory thereof unto Him.

Thirdly, Faith would not only respect Christ simply as an intercessor, but as an intercessor who is man in our nature, who hath experience of infirmities, and tender humane sympathie towards us. The neglect of this, maketh Christ look like a stranger, and maketh the soul anxious even in its addresses to Him.

Fourthly, Upon this consideration there ought to be access to with holy boldnesse, the heart exulting in its approach to God, that it hath such a new and living way, as the vail of his flesh, to approach to God by. It is often not only spoken of, but commended in the Scripture, especially in the Epistle to the Hebrews, upon this ground, as *Chap. 4. vers. last*; and *10. vers. 19, &c.* Were this considered, it would banish the drouping, heartlesse approaches that Believers make to God through Christ, as if they were coming to a stranger, whereas they approach to a brother, to a brother really and sensibly touched with their infirmities and affected with them, as any brother on earth is with the infirmities of another.

Fifthly, The heart would keep confidence on this account, as to the event, however it be for the time: can it be but well with one with whom Christ so sympathizeth? and ought not they then to comfort themselves in the hope of an outgate? Paul triumpheth upon this consideration, *Rom. 8.* that though there should be persecution, nakednesse, sword, &c. yet they should not hurt him, nor separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus, but that over all he should be a conquerour; yea, more than a conquerour. This were well becoming a Believer in straits, and were sure to this ground of strong consolation; and this confidence is to be humbly extended unto all sorts of things which may mar the Believers consolation here.

Sixthly, It is even requisite to have the exercise of Spiritual senses for the right improving of this consolation, so that Believers would carry upon themselves a little copie of that sympathie that is in Jesus Christ, and have still upon their spirits an impression of the reality thereof, that by meditating thereon, in lying down, rising up or walking, &c. the heart may be refreshed, and that excellent box of ointment may cast a savour; neither can it be, that poor believing sinners should without unspeakable refreshment and consolation conceive Christ Jesus the blessed Mediator, to have such thoughts of them, such care of them in their straits, such a touch of an fellow feeling with them in their infirmities, as that a reproach upon them, a crosse or strait, a hazard to sin, or an actual fall doth touch and affect Him, as the fall or strait of the child doth affect a tender mother; and that we may with as great boldnesse approach to him, and have as confident expectation of a hearing with Him, as children may to their most dearly loving mother:

who



who can think of these things and not be affected? and were Believers more in the thoughts of these, there would certainly be more comfort.

Seventhly, This would be to the Believer the last refuge, and whatever come, it is never to be lousd or reteired from; but when all looketh dark about, He is here to anchour, and on this intercession and sympathie to cast himself, and that not without hope that He who is a compassionate high Priest will give proof thereof, and even in the same particular. In a word, this consolation might be improvén against want and private

straits, against publick difficulties: for, He sympathizeth with His Church, and every member of it; it is most fresh in straits, because then His bowels are awake, most stirred and warmed; and it is a fortress against the terror of death, seeing He died, and therefore hath the fresher sympathie in that choke. It were even good, believers were acknowledging themselves defective in this, and would endeavour the amending of it wherein there is hopes that this compassionate high Priest would further them and furnish them with other sort of helps and directions. To Him be praise for ever.

## LECTURE II.

Verf. 5. *And the Angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thundrings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.*

6. *And the seven Angels which had the seven trumpets, prepared themselves to sound.*

7. *The first Angel sounded and there followed hail, and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth, and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grasse was burnt up.*

**I**N the beginning of this Chapter we find our Lord Jesus raking off the suspension and restraint, and making way for the breaking loose of that Judgment, which in the former Chapter He had restrained. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Angel of the Covenant, hath a double end in these three Verses, to wit, the 3, 4, and 5. 1. To provide for His people, and to make them and their prayers acceptable to God as the best guard against the coming storm: and this is past in the former two Verses, to wit, the 3, and the 4. 2. To give the word and signe for the Angels to sound the alarm, that these Judgements restrained by the four Angels (*Chap. 7.*) might fall on; this is performed in this fifth Verse, wherein are two things 1. The signe given. 2. The effects.

1. The signe is, that he filleth the censer with fire of the altar, and casteth it into the earth: whereby both the signe is given (as if he had now done that, for which he had inhibited them to hurt the earth, till it was performed, *Chap. 7.*) and the nature of that Judgement pointed at in three things, 1. In the object of it, it is cast into the earth; by the earth, we understand the visible Church here, or that part of the earth where the visible Church sojourneth, called (*Mat. 13.*) the field, or world; because as the world containeth all creatures, so it containeth all professors good and bad. It is the same earth the winds were not to blow upon, *Chap. 7.* 1. now they are let loose: and it is such a Earth, as hath trees, grasse, and green herbs growing in it; some whereof do wither, and are hurt, and carried away with this storm, some are still lively and kept safe under Gods seal from it, as *Chap. 9.* 4. whereby it is clear, that by trees are meant men sealed and unsealed, which are no where but in the visible Church: and this is to be remembered in application of the trumpets afterward. 2. The signe, expressing the nature of the Judgement, is set out to be fire casten, &c. Casting of fire (*Ezek. 10. 2.*) is holden forth to be a denunciation of Judgement coming, and the Lords departing from His Temple; and so we take it to signifie here some sad Judgement of a spiritual nature coming on the Church. 3. It is said to be taken from the altar; to shew, what sort of fire or contention it is, or, whereabout it should rise; not about external civil things, but spiritual, according to Christs word, *Luke 12. 42.* I came to send fire on the earth, &c. which being compared with *Mat. 10.* is clear to be divisions, and variances about Religion, kindled by a mistaken and misguided zeal in some, and by passion, pride, and

enmity in others; it is kindled in the Church, and floweth from the altar, and these that serve at it, and spreadeth in others, This is otherwise expounded by some, as Christs sending forth His Spirit, and Grace, like fire in the hearts of His people: But, 1. this agreeth not so to the scope; for, immediately the Angels prepare themselves, as taking the word to be given them by this. Nor, 2. doth it agree so to the event or effect, which certainly is terrible, and expounded so through this Book, *Chap. 9.* and 11. *ult. voices, thundrings, and earthquakes* set out Gods terrour, especially considering how they are linked together with Judgements. And, 3. It agreeth best to the signe of casting down fire from the altar, which is opposed to His gracious sending up incense added to the prayers of all Saints, in the Verse before; and this followeth as His rejecting and casting back such services (as it were) of others beside His Saints, there being a great difference between incense ascending and fire descending: and Christs using the same instrument (as, the censer) for both, sheweth, His doing it as Mediator, having all power in Heaven and Earth; and therefore it is said, *Luke 12.* He came to send it not only occasionally, but by His overruling, guiding, and timing of it; and expressly (as it is a Judgement,) it is said (*2 Thes. 2.*) He will send them strong delusions, &c.

2. The effect of this, is answerable, in the close of the Verse, *There were voices, lightnings, &c.* which shew some terrible effect and stir that followed; for, though *thundrings, &c.* may sometimes be as an evidence of Gods hearing prayer, *1 Sam. 12. 16.* Yet, considering how other wayes it is taken in this Book, (See *Chap. 11. 14. and 16. 18.*) and that they follow the casting of fire on the earth, and that the Angels immediately sound, who till now were restrained, we cannot but look upon it, as a word given to them to make ready immediately upon the back of this signe; the seven Angels prepare to sound, upon which, fire and other judgements followed, &c. And if it be asked, why not before? it is insinuated, they waited for orders, and the signe and command which now they get. 2. Further, Observe, There is in these effects a gradation, and the sh-rpest and sorest is hindmost, and these steps may be for a little sum of what was to follow by the sounding of the first four trumpets especially, as will appear.

Observe, 1. In this with its order, comparing it with what went before Christs intercession, and the Saints, praying, That Judgement,

ments, even spiritual Judgements of Error, schism, Division, &c. may follow a praying time and a praying frame of Gods people; I mean on the visible Church, while the Godly are serious in prayer, and hypocrites but dissemble. There may follow very great spiritual Judgements on a Church after a praying spirit hath been on the Lords People in that Church. All the Saints have been praying before, though they were not acceptable, but through Christs intercession; and yet, upon the back of that, followeth this Judgement. Experience hath proven the truth of this; and it floweth partly from the malice of the devil, that worketh and rageth the more, the more instant and earnest they be with God; partly, from the Judgement of God, plaguing godlesse and formal hypocrites, who in a praying-time joyn with the Godly, but (as it is 2. *Thess. 2.*) have not the love of the Truth, nor a practice suitable to it; and the more that such pray, they draw on the more guilt accidentally, and there is the more giving up to be discovered; and partly, God may be forewarning, and forearming His people by such a frame against such a storm. What marvel if after our purity and praying, such a Judgement come to discover a multitude of gracelesse, profane hypocrites, and counterfeit dissemblers, and to give them a fill of their own ways that were not in love with His? Beside, Gods peoples praying for Christs Kingdom flourishing, and His peoples prosperity, will hasten judgement on them who do not grow in it. Often inward enmity at the right way, when its not received in love, though it may be in profession, is plagued with outward outbreking in wrong ways, more than if there had never been profession. 2. This fire cometh from the altar, *Observe*, That there is a fire that cometh from the altar that hath right terrible effects, 1. by such instruments, concerning such a subject as belongeth to the altar, and followed that way. Or, thus, Contention and strife about spiritual things amongst Church-men, and flowing from them to others, is a very sad Judgement and hath very terrible effects; it most marreth the beauty of the Church, it obstructeth the spiritual growth of Gods people, and burneth up all their spiritual life. Lord save us from this Judgement, and make all His servants and people warrie of the kindling of it, and make us more earnest in prayer, that God would quench what of it is begun, lest it go on to consume us. *Observe*. 3. That these spiritual Judgements are ordered and timed by Christ, who setteth bounds to them: His sovereignty reacheth these things, the fire cometh not till He cast it; the trumpets sound not till He give them orders; 2. *Thess. 2.* He sendeth strong delusion; *Luke 12.* I came to send fire on the earth: though the sin be lying on them, and others be instrumental in it, yet the delusion cometh not by guesse; and when God in Judgement plagueth, He hath His own way of ordering and timing it, as He thinketh meet; and were not His bridle in the mouth of this Judgement, we had been more consumed with it ere now.

The 6. *vers.* sheweth to what purpose this was; and in it, it is said, the seven Angels prepared themselves to sound: Why not at first when the trumpets were given them? *Answer*. Because (as we said) they waited for orders; and now, orders being given, they delay not; but fall to do their duty; Yet, 1. by preparing either themselves, or their instruments for it. 2. By keeping due order and not confounding their commissions, and the timing of these, neither precipitating without commission, though furnished with gifts; nor rashly, and confusedly going about it, but with preparation and order: which things are certainly mentioned for imitation, that these who pray for grace to do Gods will on earth as it is done in heaven, may take this as a pattern; especially such as are intrusted to be Heralds and to sound His trumpets.

1. They are set apart and designed for this office; so should Ministers, they should look well they be designed for this office,

and have their calling clear, as these seven Angels were separated from others to this work. 2. Trumpets are given them, that is, they are furnished with gifts; whomsoever He designeth for an office in His house, He furnisheth them, and giveth trumpets to all whom He calleth to sound. 3. When they have gotten trumpets, they will not blow while He command to sound: it is not gifts that warrant men to Preach, but they must have particular orders when to do it. The Word must be taken from his mouth, when, where, and how He shall order it. 4. They are prepared, advised and wary in going about the work when they are called to sound: Gods giving of gifts and orders to exercise them, is not enough except men prepare themselves for the work, and be advised and wary in going about it, as Paul to *Timothie*, 2 *Tim. 1. 6.* Stir up the gift that is in thee, &c. 5. They are diligent and faithful in their execution when they have gotten orders and are prepared; although the message be heavy, faithfulness and diligence is a good property of a Minister of Christ. 6. They keep an orderly way of proceeding in discharging their duty, every one in their station, and not in a confused way; so it becometh Ministers: and Ministers, being resembled to Angels; and their giving of warning, to the sounding of the trumpet, Their office and duty may be thus pointed at here. Lastly, Sounding of a trumpet, implieth distinctness, 1 *Cor. 14.* and stateliness and power in the manner of carrying their commission, giving alarm convincingly and plainly, which notably agreeth to Ministers.

Followeth, from the 7. *vers.* and forward, their sounding: where there is in every trumpet, 1. The sounding. 2. The effect or consequent of the sounding; and that is the judgement that followed. 3. The object of the judgement, the earth. And, 4. the extent, fruits and effects of the judgement.

To understand more particularly this prophesie of the trumpets, which is an hard place, and needeth Gods special direction in it (which we humbly desire (we premit these considerations or observations, which may in some things fix us in the opening of it.

1. For its beginning, rise, and close; it is cleared before, to rise after the breaking of that little peace the Church enjoyed under *Constantine*, and to close at Antichrists begun fall, when he is brought to a height, and the vials begin to be poured out.

2. It is not only contemporary with, but hath respect unto, the prophesie of the beasts, *Chap. 13.* and *Chap. 11. vers. 9.* as also the rise and close of that prophesie of the beasts, will fall under the same times and marches: whereby it appeareth (considering also *Chap. 7. 1.* &c. and what was said there) they do most directly belong to the Church, and that in spiritual trials.

3. Consider, that the fifth trumpet looketh clearly to Antichrist and his discovery openly, as appeareth by comparing, *vers. 4. Chap. 9.* with *vers. 8. Chap. 13.* The same persons and by the same mark, are kepted from the Spiritual hurt of both; as also, that the sixth trumpet bringeth the *Mahometans* upon the back of that, the *Turks* being raised as a scourge for the Idolatry of the former, which are the first two great woes; and the first four are lesser in comparison of these. Now, this discovery of Antichrist, will be about the six hundred year, or a little after: the first four then must precede that time, and continue the state of the Church from the three hundred or thereby (where the seals are closed) till that time.

4. Consider, that the main drift, is, to discover that defection of the visible Church in declining by steps from purity in Doctrine and simplicity in Worship, which endeth in Antichrists height; and also consider it, as it is penal, every step of their sin and defection being (in Gods righteous judgement)



penal, including in it some Spiritual plague, and carrying alongst with it, or on the back of it, some temporal judgement on the world, and exercise or trial on the Godly, especially under Antichrist.

5. Consider, that it doth not so much point at particulars either of things or persons, as to shew the general state of the Church in these successive times by whatsoever instruments or events of all sorts, having influence on her declining, and especially as they make way for Antichrists growth, by weakening the Church or shaking the Empire: which being the main scope, is more clearly insisted on in the 11. Cap. and in the vision, Cap. 12, 13, and 14. therefore may they in part, be of a mixed nature as they stand in reference to this scope.

6. It is observable, That as in all the other changes of periods, so in this, the overturning of the visible Church is compared to the overturning of the world, and plaguing the Earth, Sea, Rivers, Sun, Moon, &c. There are three worlds mentioned, which successively are defaced by the three principal prophecies of this Book, 1. The heathen world, it is overturned together, Chap. 6. and under the sixth seal. 2. To it succeedeth the Christian world, when Religion hath liberty and the countenance of the Romane Authority; this is defaced successively under the trumpets, by that world declining to be antichristian, and by his getting Authority and Power on his side, and bringing the Church witnesses and Saints low. This Popish, or Antichristian world, is destroyed under the vials, in the same expressions of Sea, Earth, &c. All which states of the Church in the Empire, are compared to different worlds, and their overturning or defacing to the changing of the world, while it is only the Religion or Religion in the world which suffereth change.

7. If we will look to the trumpets, as the effects follow them, and to the vials and their effects, There is a great suitableness between them in all. The first trumpet is on the Earth, and so is the first vial poured out on it; the second on the Sea; the third on the Rivers, in both; so the fourth on the Sun. The fifth trumpet bringeth out Antichrist as on his throne, the fifth vial is poured out on the seat or throne of the beast; the sixth trumpet looseth the four Angels at Euphrates, the vial drieth up that River: whereby it appeareth, that God destroyeth Antichrist in that same method he grew, and cleareth His Church, as she was in several steps darkned, obscured and troubled; that as Antichrist brought in a new counterfeit Church or World by degrees, overturning what was before, So shall he be destroyed. And therefore, as the destruction of Antichrist and his world, is clearly intended by the vials; so this world, which is overturned here, must be understood of the visible Church, on whose ruines that Antichristian world was erected, seeing the rise of Antichrist inferreth the defacing of the Church, and that by the same steps and in the same method, as his ruine followeth by the vials. Neither can there by any other reason given of the accurate resemblance which is between the trumpets and vials, which yet cannot be thought to be without reason; neither can there be an overturning of the Antichristian world, til it be built; nor can it be thought to be built, but under the trumpets, to wit, after the Heathenish world is past and the Christian built; yea, after the Christian world beginneth to decay: all which fall under the trumpets; for, two of those worlds cannot stand together; yet still one of them followeth upon the back of the other, so as the overturning of the Heathenish world, supponeth Christianity to succeed; and as the destroying of the Antichristian world by the vials, supposeth purity to succeed, So here the decay of the Christian world, supposeth the Antichristian to succeed. All which, being put together, 1. It is clear that the declining of the Church from purity, and that the rise and discovery of Antichrist, is the main scope of these trumpets, 2. That we must expound Earth,

Mountains, waters, Sun, &c. to be something in the Church bearing an analogie to these things in the world.

8. Yet we say, these trumpets are not to be so bounded, as if the first were contemporary with Antichrists discovery and sensible rise, which is in the fifth; for, then there would be a great void in the prophesie, in passing over many considerable events in the Church during the second three hundred years, wherein Truth and Christs Kingdom were much concerned, which we conceive could not be omitted in this prophesie; and yet no where else can be thought to be set down; we are therefore to look on them as they hold out the Churches first storms after the world became Christian, and whereby she was exercised during the time of Antichrists secret and unseen working, who took occasion from all these to fix himself; and by all which the world was by degrees disposed to receive him, who after the first four trumpets is found to step out under the fifth; and this we conceive to be the reason why the first four trumpets are distinguished from the last three, which contain the story of Antichrist after his full manifestation.

From which considerations, we suppose it is clear, 1. That these trumpets denote the state of the Church with some order of time. There is certainly order in the three last trumpets, in respect of themselves, and in respect of these which precede; and therefore it is not for the clearing of them, to expound them of kinds of heresies in a confusion, as agreeing to any time. 2. That they do not principally intend temporal changes on the Roman Empire, as the object of these mutacions, or as vindictive on them for their former persecutions, (though these spiritual ills be set out in expressions suiting temporal judgements, even as the Churches disputes with Hereticks, are set out by fightings, and such like) for, the Saints and witnesses especially, suffer temporally here, when all the world otherwise rejoiceth, Chap. 11. It remaineth then, that the object is the Church visible; the nature of them is Spiritual principally (as is said before) with temporal exercises on the Church and judgements on the Empire.

The order and sum of the trumpets then we conceive to be this. The four first trumpets (which comparatively with the other three following, are the lesser woes) hold forth the Churches declining and weakening from under Constantine (as was touched before) about the three hundred and twenty year or thereabouts when Antichrist had his working under ground, til his discovery, which is in the fifth trumpet, about the year six hundred and some odds, holden out in these steps. 1. What was set upon in all these trumpets and in what order? 2. By what means? 3. With what successe and fruit?

1. Enemies publicly set upon the very foundation of Christianity, without which a man is no Christian, as, if Christ be by nature God (if He was *ὁὐκ ἦν θεός*, in opposition to Arius) of the same Essence with the Father, though a different Person, which who believed not, in the Primitive times was justly accounted no Christian. This was done by discovered and open Hereticks, such as Arius, Macedonius, Eutyches, Nestorius, &c. striking all of them at the Person and Natures of our Lord Jesus. This was a violent storm, striking at the foundation, and took away many Professors of all sorts, yet the earth it self stood like a Rock, though trees on it were burnt up. All these Heresies were rejected by the Church, and condemned by the first four famous general Councils. The first whereof was convened at Nice by Constantine about the year 325, wherein was condemned the heresie of Arius, who denied the God-head of Jesus Christ, or that He was by nature God, as the Father was, though he accounted Him more than a man, and so differeth from Photinus. The second was at Constantinople by Gratian and Theodosius, Anno. 380. In this was condemned the heresie of Macedonius, who denied the person.

personality of the holy Ghost, the third Person of the blessed Trinity: His followers therefore were called *πνευματομαχοι*. i. e. fighters against the spirit. The third, was at *Ephesus*, under *Theodosius* the second, Anno 431. It condemned *Nestorius*, who made Christ to have Persons as two Natures. The fourth was at *Chalcedon*, under *Martianus*, Anno. 451. This rejected the Doctrine of *Eutyches*, who, in opposition to *Nestorius*, attributed to Christ but one Nature, thus confounding His Natures, as the former had divided His Person. In the computation of these times, it is not to be expected, that we can be so peremptory, there being some little difference amongst Authors according to their various timing of events, yet without any material prejudice to the truth of the story. This is the first trumpet.

2. This storm being by discovered enemies, Satan cometh not so good speed; he assaileth, next, the corrupting of government, by removing of which, he might have fair access to what he pleased or intended to bring in afterward. To effectuate this, he inflameth the Church-men with pride, and from it, for precedencie, wakeneth contention (as once he did amongst the Apostles) whereby the work of God was much retarded, and poor souls stumbled, and the Ordinances of Christ (especially government) corrupted. Who would see this, may read *Plessiens* mysterie of Iniquity about the four hundred year, and what dealing there was with the east Church and falsifying of votes of Synods, as that of *Nice*, proven from authentick Copies, for that end, sought and found by the fathers of *Africk*, may be seen, *Cent. Magdeburg*; yea, also in *Baronius*. This prevailed, the mountain taketh fire, and becometh low in its grandour and spiritual weight and credit, and all are infected with this, to be more about outward pomp than inward power, about earthly things more than spiritual. This is the second trumpet.

3. The devil, (having prevailed this much by Church-men) setteth on, next, to poison fountains and rivers which men drink of and live upon; Doctrines were somewhat clear before, and fundamentals were not easily overthrown while government and unity were in force. Now he poisoneth sound Doctrine in the mouths of Ministers; and free-will, justification by good works and external holiness, merit, dispensations, penances, purgatory, sacraments, *opus operatum*, especially traditions, are brought in: whereby the wholesome Word was corrupted in many places of the word, and its native purity lost; and instruments were made use of in this, who once seemed to shine in the Church, as *Pelagius*, *Origen*. &c. This is the third trumpet.

4. In the fourth trumpet, the light is further obscured, and the beauty of pure Doctrine in the Church darkened, the Scripture is veiled and kept up, ignorance fostered, tradition is brought in place of Scripture, will-worship and ceremonies for the practice of holy duties, &c. Whereby the glorious light of the Gospel and of the Church was darkened and grew dim, making way for Antichrists rising, though it increased much more under him, yet even then men were more taken up with Monkishness and these toys, than with things which were more profitable, out of which darkness Antichrist at last start up, and took it on him, in the fifth trumpet: whereupon followeth *Mahomet* in the sixth, as his and the worlds scourge, until the vials make a turn, and this height of Antichrist be brought down even as he rose; Which series of the vials, beginneth with the seventh trumpet.

This series agreeth well with the types and also with the truth of the event in the matter of fact, as afterward succeeded, and so the Church is wasted, blasted, and way made for Antichrist by these first four; and therefore there can be no unwarrantableness in speaking thus of them. It agreeth also well with the scope, in shewing Antichrists rise by these steps: Only,

take that advertisement which we gave on the seals, That though there be an order in the rise of these things one after another, yet neither would we be peremptory in timing it; or ascribing it to particular events, nor yet think, that one endeth, or goeth away, when the other cometh; nay, they continue together, and do compleat the Churches darkening, as it was with the dispensations under the seals; the first continued till the last, but had order in its rising, so here. And though something of the latter trumpets might be working, even as soon as the former, and no doubt the fifth began to work soon, yet the trumpet looketh at such a thing in a height or its discovery, and so the second was working under the first, but did not break out till the first was some length proceeded.

We come now particularly to the Angels sounding. The first soundeth in this seventh Verse, Where we are to consider, beside the sounding, these three things, 1. The judgement threatened, or the signe of it, *fire and hail mingled with blood*; a very great storm. 2. Its object, the earth. 3. The effect, the third part of trees and all green grasse was burnt up: It is like it alludeth to one of the plagues of *Egypt*, whereby much desolation was wrought; here it signifieth a spiritual storm, called *hail*, partly, because of its cold, blasting and terrible nature, especially in these Countreys, it being the great cause of barrenesse and unfruitfulness then; partly, because of the hurtfulness of it; so it signifieth that which heresie (in general) floweth from and carrieth with it, to wit, coldnesse in practice of Religion towards God, and affection towards others, making men cold within, and barren and unfruitful without; but this *hail* is more than an ordinary blast and storm, coming impetuously, though not lasting long. 2. There is *fire*, in terrible tempests, they were mixed; and this signifieth the rent of unity in practice and affection by contention and passion, as the former the defacing of Doctrine by some terrible Error. So, *Luk. 12. 42. I came to send fire on the earth*, and *James. 3.* it is said, the tongue is set on fire and kindleth others. This fire of division, is a companion of heresie; and heresies do often more hurt to the Church by their contentions and schisms than by their Doctrines, it being the kindling of this fire that in the judgement of many denominateth one an Heretick, which he would not be by his simple adhering to an Error, if nothing were of this. As also it is observable, that *hail*, which is cold, hath fire with it, like *Ephraim, Hos. 7. 8.* who was like an unturned cake, hot beneath, and cold affections above, these go together, much zeal in an erroneous opinion and heat for that, which is ever accompanied with coldnesse in more fundamental things; the colder men be in the one, the hotter are they in the other, as the Pharisees were for their own traditions, zealous, but in Gods commands indifferent. 3. It is *mingled with blood*: which holdeth out the bloody nature of heresie and of this meant here; which we think rather to be understood of their putting faithful opposers to suffering for withstanding their Doctrine, than their suffering for it: this also is a fruit of the fiery spirit, that when words prevail not, and their falshood is discovered, they run to open violence; and there is no cruelty like this of Hereticks.

2. The object of this judgement, is, the earth. And, 3. the effects, are, the burning up a third part of trees and all green grasse.

1. By *earth*, we understand, 1. either indefinitely the visible Church, which is set upon & defaced in its most clear and plain truths, *Chap. 7. 1* Or, 2. more especially, the foundations of it, such truths as are most solidly to be believed, without which the visible Church cannot stand, as that, concerning the Person, Natures and Offices of the Son of God, as the earth in the Pagan World, *Chap. 6.* and in the Antichristian World, *Chap. 16.* may and doth signifie their foundations, and what seemed most strong in them, and essential to them, when their foundations



were shaken they must fall, so here the right confession of Christ and pure Doctrine of faith in Him, is called the foundation or rock on which the Church is builded, *Mat. 16.* Or, Thirdly, it may shew the spreading of this plague, or sore, over the very face of the Church in respect of its extent, there being no part of the earth free of it.

3. *The burning up of trees and all green grass*, holdeth forth, 1. The dreadful effects of this judgement on eminent Professors, some for gifts and knowledge; some it may be for grace; and withal, some eminent for place and authority, called *trees*, as *palmer* and stronger than others: and upon *all grass*, as if an utter barrenness followed it, and a pleasant land were turned to a burnt-up wilderness, that nothing almost was free from the hurt of that plague. 2. Yet it is limited, and a third part but of trees burnt up; many eminent men are kept free.

Now, if we come to particular application of it, it is done, 1. (as some think) in respect of temporal judgements on the Empire; which in this time followed by the *Goths, Vandals, &c.* 2. As others think, in respect of particular heresies, to wit, of the *Arians, Macedonians, Nestorians, Pelagians, &c.* Or, 3. as others, in respect of Antichrists rise, as something crept in, tending to his bringing forth in the Church by several steps. But, 4. They may be generally applyed to the state of the Church in such a time under them all; yet, (looking more especially to some remarkable particular, which we think latest, because it is most comprehensive, and yet not inconsistent with, but agreeth best to the scope, series, and order, and to the effect) it sheweth the declining state of the Church in respect of time, which also hath its tendency to Antichrist beightning. For, 1. Heresie maketh way for him who still was fishing in troubled waters; and *Rome*, by its Authority and outward greatness, had too much influence in these debates, as an Umpire amongst dissentients. 2. The Empire diminishing proved a taking him out of the way, which withheld, and so made still a more open door for his rising, 2 *Thess. 2.*

Yet we think the *Arian* heresie, and what followed, accompanied and depended on it, is especially holden forth by this first trumpet; and we account the *Macedonian* heresie a branch of the same, for these reasons, 1. Because this change and danger of the Church by it, was so great, that it is not like other storms would be mentioned; and this past in silence; and no other place can be assigned so pertinent for it. 2. It agreeth and suiteth well with the series and time of this storm, which is the first after that calm the Church had in *Constantines* time.

3. The nature of it agreeth with it, 1. It was violent, and that against the most substantial and fundamental points of Religion, to wit, the Godhead of Christ and of the holy Ghost, without which, there can be no Christianity, this being the rock upon which the Christian Church is built, *Mat. 16.* And there was never more fire nor bloud in a storm; the Church was undone with contention, so that no general Synod (even that of *Nice*) could remove it, but they burst out more; and *Constantines* sad regrades and serious expostulations with Bishops because of this, and the many contrary Synods (some whereof sided with *Arius*) confirm it.

4. Much blood and persecution followed thereupon by *Constantius, Valens*, and other *Arian* Emperours and Governours (beside what was committed by the *Vandals* in *Africk*) than which was there never persecution more cruel and barbarous.

5. There were not only many, but exceeding eminent men, both civil and Ecclesiastick, led away with that Errour; sundry Emperours, as *Constantius, Valens*, before named; many Kings of the *Goths* and *Vandals*, were favourers of it; many Bishops of great note in the Church, did propagate it; yea, sometimes whole Synods of many hundreds, did establish it,

and condemn the truth, and the defenders thereof, as that Synod at *Tyre*, Anno 335. did condemn *Athanasius* under pretext of turbulency, murder and adultery. A Synod at *Antioch*, Anno 337. deposed *Eustachius* the Bishop thereof, under the like pretexts. Such was the Council of *Milans*, Anno 354. (at which it is written, that *Constantine* being now aged, was present) which did condemn many worthy men because they would not subscribe to the condemnation of *Athanasius*, such were *Hilarius, Osius, Paulinus, &c.* Another was at *Symia*, where *Osius* was whipped till he did subscribe. The great Council, (for number being accounted 1000. Bishops) met at *Arminum* and *Sileucium*, did at last establish this Doctrine, and decree that the word *ὁμοούσιος* (whereby Christ is signified to be God, of the same Essence with the Father) should be laid aside, and the word *ὁμοειδής* (whereby is signified that he is not of the same, but of the like substance or Essence) was brought in. In which two words, though there be little difference in letters, yet much in substance, concerning which there was much debate in these dayes. After *Macedonius* arose, a third word was brought in by his followers in the place of both, to wit, *ὁμοιος*, whereby he would neither call Christ of the same substance and Essence with the Father, as the Orthodox did; nor of the like substance or Essence to the Father, as the *Arians* did (who did therefore in that Synod of *Symia* condemn *Photinus* for asserting Christ to be a meer man and not God, as they did *Osius* for asserting him to be God co-essential with the Father) but simply to be like the Father, without mentioning either the unity or likeness of his Essence.

6. Many eminently Godly men were out of infirmity at last (by the violence of persecution) brought to subscribe to their way, and to condemn *Athanasius*, as did *Liberius* Bishop of *Rome*, and the foresaid *Osius* Bishop of *Corduba*, &c. who long had suffered for the truth and afterward came to the acknowledgement of it.

7. This storm, and the defection under it, became so universal, that almost all the world was become *Arian*, that it became a proverb, *Totus mundus factus est Arianus*; and *Jerome* saith in *Chronicles*, *omnes pene toto orbe Ecclesie, nomine pacis & Regis, Arianorum consortio polkuntur.*

8. Then brake in the barbarous Nations, *Goths* and *Vandals*; and the Religion they had was *Arian*, both in Kings of Italy and *Africk*, though some of them were more civil to the Church than others.

9. This contributed much to the rising of *Rome*, 1. Many distressed men, as *Athanasius*, and others, because that Church was long pure and in Authority (when others were infected and less able to help) made adrefs to it; to implore their help for vindicating them, and the truth they maintained; by owning it and Interposing for it; also Hereticks when they were condemned, appealed to *Rome*, to draw them on their side, as *Eutychis, Donatus*, and sundry others in *Africk*, which the Bishop of *Rome* made use of to intrench on others. 2. Some acts of Synods were made to prevent unjust oppression of honest men from corrupt Bishops which abounded in the *East*, during the intervals of Synods, whereby too great weight of hearing differences for that time was drawn from the *East* to the *West*, as being more free of that corruption, which was *Hosius* overture in the Council of *Sardica*, Anno 347. which was occasioned from the overspreading of *Arianism* in the *East*, even after the Council of *Nice*: from all this, *Rome* took much advantage.

3. By the Emperours too much liberty, they grew to pride; and by the diminishing of the Emperours Authority in the *West* the Bishops of *Rome* grew: so that what pride, covetousness and usurpation this age brought forth in them, may be seen at large in *Plessens* mystery, pag. 4. 44. *Centur. Magdeburg. Cent. 4.* by all which they did winde themselves some way in to be Umpires or Arbitrators of differences in other Churches, which

which afterwarde they drew to a debt and obligation on them. 101. It is violent, cooling love, and obstraining practice, where-  
 4. At that time he being desired, did interpose brotherly by, by the soul it keeps in life, but in contention for it self and  
 his Commission with other Bishops and Churches: which things belonging to it self, fiery, bloody and cruel. The first  
 being for a cause, upon the matter good, and from an eminent word looketh at the Impurity of the Doctrine, striking at the  
 Bishop, and much weight with it, and was much esteemed, very foundation, hail. The second word fire, looketh at the  
 and regarded, though not as Authoritative, which his Successors breaking of unity. The third word blood, looketh at the de-  
 cessors abused in after times. So then the Churches estate be- stroying of lives, such were the false teachers of old, such were  
 as it is here foretold to be, inwardly the Church, undone by many for number, on great men and good men sometime for  
 Hereticks, heresies, contentions, basked with pretended Au- quality, all green grass and a third part of the trees. Who would  
 thority Civil and Ecclesiastick. The Bishops of Rome working have thought so many famous able men would have been car-  
 their Supremacy in all these troubles, and he taking occasion ried away with it, that (as we said before) it became a pro-  
 to insinuate himself as Moderator among them, though yet un- verb, the world is become Arian; many Bishops and Synods,  
 der ground, and that but on the earth and low. Doctrine be- many eminent in parts, partly through reason, partly through  
 gan even then to be in many things corrupted by special men weakness, came to verbal acknowledgement of the error, and  
 in the Church, especially concerning free-will, ceremonies, &c. to condemn some honest men that spoke for the truth. This  
 By which may be gathered, what great storm this was, and how should make us be watchful and humble: would any think that  
 answerable to this type; so that its easily applied to it. Observe, the God-head of Christ or of the holy Ghost should be denyed?  
 1. In general, what a terrible thing it is to have error; how and yet this is of late revived: for, the Socinian error is the  
 resie, division and contention letten loose on a Church; it is same in substance, and hath many followers. 3. Many trees are  
 terrible as fire, hail and blood, and terrible in the effects, a spared, partly as a testimony against others, partly to give  
 a third part of the trees and grass are burnt up: few believe themselves time to repent, they are not taken away altogether.  
 this; yet these plagues are less terrible to bodies than error. Let us arm against such a storm, and become more wary and  
 and the effects of it are to souls. 2. See the nature of heresie, watch full.

## LECTURE III.

Verf. 8. And the second Angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was  
 cast into the sea, and the third part of the sea became blood:

9. And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died, and the third  
 part of the ships were destroyed.

**Y**E may remember when we began to speak of this  
 Prophetic of the trumpets, we told you that in  
 them was contained the story of the Church from  
 the interrupting of the peace that it enjoyed under  
 Constantine till Antichrist was at his height, and  
 God by pouring out of the vials came to demolish his Kingdom.  
 The Prophetic of these trumpets is divided in smaller and  
 greater woes, the last three being the greatest.

The first four do contain the History of the Church from the  
 peace it enjoyed under the sixth seal unto the discovery of Anti-  
 christ upon his seat and throne.

Ye heard, in the former trumpet, how hard the condition  
 of the Christian Church was, and by what means it was weak-  
 ened. 1. By outward inbreaking of cruel barbarous Nations,  
 merciless enemies, to the defacing of it. 2. By enemies from  
 within, such as Arians, Macedonians, Nestorians, and also Schis-  
 maticks, as Luciferians, Novatians, Audeans, &c. that would  
 not keep unity, as the former would not keep purity. 3. By  
 corrupting of the Doctrine, many unsafe and unsound Doctrines  
 attended with pernicious practices, were creeping in amongst  
 famous men in the Church. 4. It was also weakened by con-  
 tentions and ambition amongst Bishops and Ministers for their  
 precedence: out of all which, Satans design of raising Rome,  
 and bringing in Antichrist, was working, and took footing,  
 springing and spreading it self more and more till it came to the  
 height. We shall say no more of the first trumpet, but pro-  
 ceed to the rest.

This second trumpet advanceth and carrieth on the same  
 scope: and if any ask, why these trumpets blow not together,

and yet one succeedeth another? I answer, there is some inter-  
 rim, to see how the former may work; and if any will repent,  
 God taketh that time of tryal. 2. When it worketh not, a great-  
 er cometh; then He plagueth severer times more: there are de-  
 grees even of spiritual judgements, Rom. 1. When alarms work  
 not, there are worse coming.

For opening the meaning of this sad judgement, we must  
 consider in it these three things, 1. The mean made use of, or  
 the rise of the judgement, it was as a mountain burning. 2. Its  
 object, it is cast into the sea. 3. The effects that follow upon it,  
 the waters became blood, and many ships are destroyed. General-  
 ly, it sheweth that this judgement extended further than the  
 former, 1. The former was on the land only; this taketh  
 in the sea. 2. It altereth quite the nature of these seas; the  
 former destroyed but trees and grass that were growing; This  
 is more life killing.

1. It is said, as it were a great mountain, to shew it was some-  
 thing figuratively to be understood and not properly, like a  
 hill, such as Aena in Sicily, or Hela in Island, are; which  
 burneth within it self, and dissolveth it self.

By mountains in Scripture, are understood figuratively Pow-  
 ers or Authorities, Zech. 4. 7. Who art thou, O great mountain?  
 before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain. He meaneth the op-  
 position of that Monarchy which then oppressed them. Jer.  
 51. 25. Babylon is called a destroyed mountain, and a mountain  
 that shall be made a burnt mountain: So by mountains here we  
 understand eminent men in the Church and her Authority, or  
 these placed in Authority in her, who by their place are emi-  
 nent above others; it being the Church here that especially



is spoken of, this *mountain* must be their Judicatories and these in power. Therefore the Disciples, and in them Ministers, are said to be as *a city set on a mountain*, or *hill*, *Mat. 5.* these being mountains for eminency in the Church, as civil Governours, or Governments are in the State. 2. This mountain is said to be *burning*; which we conceive to be kindled with pride, and contention flowing therefrom, as Christ saith, He came to send fire on the earth, and it was already kindled, which is to be expounded variances amongst these in nearest relations: so also *fire*, it is taken for contention in *Jothams* parable, *Judg. 9.* compare *vers. 20.* with *vers. 23.* which is the more clear here, that followeth upon the former trumpet, as taking fire from it, and it seemeth to be the Church-Governours that were kindled by it. This fire having kindled within their bowels, breaketh out and infecteth others and spreadeth this division under this trumpet at the back of the former heresie and sad state which the Church was in, having to do not only with open Hereticks, but with pride and contention amongst Church-men themselves, whereby exceedingly the Church was wronged, and way was made for the in-bringing of more corruption and Antichrists rising.

2. The object, it is *cast into the sea*, 1. By the *sea*, in Scripture among the Prophets, is understood a numerous people, as, to sit on many waters, *Revel. 17. 15.* By this then we are to understand, that though this infection began among the Church-men, yet was it cast in the sea, that is, spread far off amongst the people. So it was in this time, and so it useth to be. 2. By *sea*, is understood in Scripture, Nations beyond seas; often the west part of the world, because they were by the sea divided from *Judea*, as by the earth or land is understood the east part, *Isa. 60. 5.* &c. and thus it may well here look to *Rome*, *Africk* and the west, upon which this storm mainly did fall, as the first did fall on the Church in the east chiefly, which was called the *earth*. 3. By *sea*, in this prophesie, is understood the Ordinances, in Discipline, Worship, and Government of the Church, and exercises of Religion, because in these, and by these, Christians in this World of the Church do converse together, traffique one with another, communicate one with another, as men do by seas and ships, who other ways are at a distance. So, (*Chap. 18.*) in the Antichristian world, their Church-men are compared to men in ships, or Merchants, who (amongst other things) trade for mens souls, which can be meant of no other but their Church-men, *vers. 15.* and their going about their superstitions, is compared to trading in Ships and Seas: Whereby it would appear, that here especially a storm upon Ordinances, Worship and Discipline, is signified, as in the former, the Doctrine was set upon; yet Discipline and Councils were in some vigour, both having some Authority from without by *Constantine*, unity and respect from within, as at *Nice*, soundness and solidity in proceeding; but in the succeeding ages, all was changed. First, Emperours became *Arians*, Councils became heterodox, unity was broken, partly by Schisms amongst themselves, partly by the *Pelagians* and *Donatists*, which at this time came to a height: separation from Churches, flowing from pride under the pretext of the unholiness of the Churches Members, began & continued long, troubling especially the west part of the world, which formerly was free, and the preaching of the Word was soiled with humane inventions by men who were not Hereticks, the government of the Church spoiled, broken, dissolved and burnt; pride consumeth all and maketh it contemptible. So it is said of *Babylon*, *Jer. 21. 25.* *I will make thee a burnt mountain*, when the dissolution of her authority is prophesied of.

3. The effects of this mountains casting in the sea, recorded here, are two, the one the effect of the other, 1. The *waters are turned into blood*, shewing they were corrupted; that being the great evidence of corruption in them, alluding to the plague

of *Egypt*, *Exod. 7. 19.* which sheweth, that by that foregoing rent, Discipline was weakened, Ordinances corrupted, and the nature of them altered; they were before useful, now they are hurtful, as being abused by this fire mountains falling into them. So the Synods, Councils and Ministry in many places became such as were rather for destruction than edification, and Churches were rent and divided, and stumblings laid before poor people, whereby the second effect followed, that is, as in waters turned to blood, fishes cannot live, so by these errors in Doctrine and Worship (which both now continue together) poor souls are destroyed, simplicity of Worship corrupted with ceremonies and traditions, and all Church-men, almost, who trade in these ships, are undone and destroyed with this ambition; for, *blood* signifieth any death, even spiritual death, *Ezek. 3. 18.* *His blood will I will require of thee*, &c. which is His spiritual killing of them; and here we are to understand their being killed with self-seeking and pride, and so to be dead while they were alive, *1 Tim. 5. 6.* and deadly to others also. In sum then, by the second trumpet we are to understand the corruption of the Government and Governours, who heightening their places beyond Christs order, and exercising that power, not for edification, but for destruction (contrary to its nature) in fiery contentions flowing from their pride and ambition, by which the eminency of the Church in that respect was dissolved in its Authority, and became low (as a mountain doth which is consumed by fire from within) whereby many dreadful effects tending both to the wronging of the Ordinances of Jesus Christ, and exceeding hurtfull to all the members of the Church who lived under them, were brought to passe and so the Churches life (as it were) brought into greater hazard, than under open Hereticks.

For application of this, we will find it suit well with the contentions that followed on the Council of *Nice*, and then burst out amongst Church-men, exceeding hurtfully unto the Church: for clearing whereof, we may observe these things from the story of that time, 1. Divisions and contentions abounded, as is clear from the many complaints of Emperours and Fathers, especially *Gregorius Naz.* Who therefore took a prejudice at Councils, because so much contention followed that of *Nice*.

As also by the many contrary Synods and contests for precedency in them among Church-men, who continued till the Bishop of *Rome* carried away the title of *universal Bishop*, as will appeare more under the fifth trumpet, 2. The time of these contentions will agree to this; for this fire of pride was kindled and the foundation laid for carrying on these contests to that height from the former heresie; some acts were made, whereby some Bishops, especially they of *Rome*, were preferred to others, because they were more free of that infection, and were more able to help the truth and these who were persecuted for it in the *East*, as particularly that seventh canon at *Sardica*, overturned by *Qsius* for that end, from which *Rome* took advantage afterward. 3. In these Councils upon this occasion the precedency of some Seas was established, and a foundation of the Ecclesiastick hierarchie was laid. First, The Council of *Nice* appointed four Patriarchs, at *Alexandria* in *Egypt*, at *Antioch* in *Asia*, at *Jerusalem* in *Syria*, at *Rome* in the *West*, over all Metropolitans, who yet were independently of equal Authority within their own bounds, as is clear, *Can. 6.* Secondly, After that *Rome* was preferred in order to the rest, and *Constantinople* made second, not by any dignity of these Seas, but because they were the seats of the imperial Authority, as appeareth from *Can. 3.* of the second Council at *Constantinople*, confirmed, *Can. 28.* of the Council at *Chalcedon*, and the 36. *Can.* of the Council at *Trullos*, where *Constantinople* is made second to *Rome*, because it was new *Rome*, and had the same civil priviledges with old *Rome*, which sheweth the reason why both these

these Sees were preferred, was built meerly upon civil privileges, which also *Balsamon* upon the foresaid canons confirmeth upon *Justinians* Laws, *Novel* 130. 4. *Rome* took much occasion to plead its supremacy, partly from these constitutions, partly from the practice of men who still endeavoured to have that Bishop on their side as a great help to their party, and therefore fled to it for succour whether they maintained Truth or Error; partly, from this, that their interposing had great weight with others upon the former considerations, which they endeavoured afterward to impose upon other Churches as of due belonging to them, and therefore first opposed that act whereby *Constantinople* was equal to them, and afterward pleaded for appeal unto themselves from the Churches of the east and in *Africk*, as appeareth by their letters to the Council of *Antioch*, and their propositions made in the Council of *Chalcedon*, but more especially by their ambassages and letters to the Council of *Carthage*, where these things are observable,

1. That one *Apianus*, Bishop of *Sica*, justly censured by a former Council at *Carthage*, did appeal to the Bishop of *Rome*. 2. Three Bishops of *Rome*, *Zosimus*, *Boniface*, *Celestinus*, one after another, did so far own that appeal, as to admit the sentenced person to their communion, and to send *Fauslinus* and others their Ambassadors to the sixth Council of *Carthage* (where were convened 217. Bishops, among which was *Augustine*, and *Aurelius* Bishop of *Carthage*, who preceded, and is called Pope by *Balsamon*) desiring the former sentence to be repealed. 3. They grounded their interposing in these matters upon the Council of *Nice*; some pretended acts whereof, their Commissioner *Fauslinus* produced, wherein it was alleged to be decreed that a Bishop in any place might appeal to the Bishop of *Rome*. 4. It is observable that these Fathers acknowledged no such act, neither was there any such found amongst the canons of the Council at *Nice* which any of them had seen, and therefore did suspect the design of the *Roman* Bishop, as aiming to stretch his power too far; whereupon they directed messengers to the Bishops of *Antioch*, *Constantinople*, and *Alexandria*, for obtaining authentick and unsuspected copies of the canons of the said Council, which afterward they received from *Cyrellus* Bishop of *Alexandria*, and *Atticus* Bishop of *Constantinople*, without any such acts in them for *Romes* Authority as was alleged.

It is true, this supremacy was not pleaded from any divine institution (which at that time they did pretend unto) but only upon Ecclesiastick constitution; it is true also that what ever privileges *Rome* claimed by *Constantines* donation, or any canons of the Council of *Nice* and *Sardica*, are also attributed unto *Constantinople* by the Councils of *Constantinople* and *Chalcedon*; whereby its Authority and privileges are every way equal to *Rome* in things Ecclesiastick, as it was equal to it in Civil things by the Emperours Laws; so that appeals were as warrantable to *Constantinople* as to *Rome* (as *Balsamon* also upon the former Councils alleageth: and therefore sheweth the privileges of *Constantinople* and its Bishop out of the gift of *Constantine*, as it is called, to the Bishops of *Rome*.) 3. It is also clear, that there was no just ground; even from Ecclesiastick constitutions, for that which was pretended, and that these Fathers foresaid did neither credit the Bishop of *Rome* in asserting his own Authority, nor yet cede to him in the least measure when they had evidenced his alleageance to be false; but, on the contrary; maintained their own Authority to be independent of him, and therefore do enact that from thenceforth none of their number should appeal beyond Sea, to wit, to *Rome* *Can.* 31. and that none should cite another of their number thither, *Can.* 126. under pain of Excommunication; and did write back to *Boniface*, and after to *Celestin* (*Zosimus* being dead ere the answer from *Egypt* returned) expostulating with them for the marring them in the exercise of their due Autho-

rity, and pleading that none, censured by them, should be heard by him, or received into communion with him; and did also refuse to loose the sentence of the foresaid *Apianus* (whereupon he afterward left his dependency on the Bishop of *Rome* and submitted to his own Synod) I say, though these things be true, and it might be thought that the supremacy of *Rome* had no great advantage from them, yet from this we may see that Church-authority was abused by the pride of Church-men, even at that time; and that, upon the occasion of the former heresie, grounds were laid, from which the Bishops of *Rome* drew encouragements to prosecute their supremacy, & upon which they continued to build it up, till it came to its height, for still there were debates about it, especially between them and the Bishop of *Constantinople* (who, in the Emperour *Mauritius* his time, assumed first to himself the title of *universal Bishop* and precedence beyond *Rome*, because then the Emperour lived at *Constantinople*) untill Antichrist was discovered. By which we may see how hurtful that contention was to the Church, and how far it contributed in the event of it for the advancing of Antichrist, which is the main plague intended in these trumpets, and therefore not unsuitably taken in under this second trumpet, as being agreeable with the scope, type, time, and other reasons alleaged in the application of the former trumpet,

Observe, 1. What an evil thing pride is, especially when it entereth among Church-men: O how evil a thing is it! it is the inlet of all confusion, it openeth a door to it and every evil work, and hath a special hand in overturning of whatsoever is beautiful in a Church, *James* 3. 14, 16. Therefore it is no wonder Satan seek to destroy government and unity, when he would destroy a Church; and no wonder Christ so much commend humility and unity to his followers. 2. The more eminent folks be in place or power, they are the sooner kindled with the fire of pride; the higher mens places be, they are the readier to grow proud; mountains sooner than valleys, men of gifts sooner than others, they have fewel to this fire that others do want, and are more obnoxious to blasts; partly, the things being excellent they have in their hand; and partly, they being eminently and highly planted, pride hath the more matter to work upon, and Satan hath the readier access and occasion to blow them up, it is a rare thing to be eminent and humble; to be great in prosperity, & yet to be lowly: prosperity & gifts are a snare to many, it had been advantage to many they had never had them, considering how they have been abused by their pride and other corruptions. 3. Pride is especially incident to Church-men: which might be cleared both in the Old and New Testament. They are as cities set on an hill *Matthew* 5. The Church is a mountain that is eminent, and Church-governours are eminent above others: and therefore liable to manifest tentations, being about the most eminent things, the devil setteth on them most, knowing what advantage he hath when he hath gained ground among them, and Christ had to do even with his disciples in this, *Matth.* 18. *vers.* 20. 4. It is a great plague and judgement, and bringeth great hurt to the Church: when this fire of pride and contention entereth and kindleth among the Officers of the Church, it spreadeth, marreth and corrupteth all; it is the rise of much ill, and abusing of the power that God hath given: *Diotrephes*, loving the preeminency, put all in confusion; it began soon in *Johns* days, 3 *Epist. John.* and it is opposed to the receiving of the Gospel, and accounting of the Apostles. This is no matter of laughing to you, however ye look upon it as if ye were not concerned, no, it is your plague, as if a fiery mountain were tumbled over on you. This should make us all respect unity and peace in the Church, and watch against pride and contention that marreth it. 5. There are four ills in this text that follow on pride and contention among Church-men; 1. It weakeneth and bringeth



bringeth down Church-authority, when this mountain taketh fire, it falleth. 2. It spreadeth, infecteth, and kindleth others. it goeth among the people, I am of Paul, and I am of Apolos, and they become carnal and factious, 1 Cor. 1. 12. and 3. 1, 2. and the life of Religion is eaten out amongst them, seeing from the Priests profaneis spreadeth through the whole land, Jer. 23 and so do pride and contention; kindle the Officers, and the whole Church will be in a fire. If we looked on it rightly, we would think the rise of contention a terrible plague, and people would beware of adding fuel to this fire, and labour by all means to quench it; because it is hard to know where it may end. 3. It corrupteth all, first, the Doctrine; secondly, the Practice; thirdly, Discipline and Order, and then cometh confusion and every evil work. 4. Many are stumbled and Spiritually slain when these waters become blood; so that corrup-

tion of Government and Governours is no small judgement whereby we may know why Satan smeth so much at this, and why we ought to be the more watchful against it.

6. This plague, or stroke, on the Church, doth often accompany a spirit of error and defection; partly succeeding it, partly going before it, either causally inferred, or at least occasioned, or in Gods righteous judgement trysted with it, that the trial may have the greater extent and efficacy to discover many Hypocrites and rotten Professours. Tremble to think on it, and adore Gods holy Justice in the measure it is met out to us in our time: when the outward mean of Discipline and Government is so weakened, there had need to be the more watchfulness and dependencie on God to be helped and sustained by him, when outward means are not so frequent nor in such vigor as they wont to be.

## LECTURE IV.

Ver. 10. *And the third Angel sounded, and there fell a great Star from heaven burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters.*

11. *And the name of the Star is called worm-wood, and the third part of the waters became worm-wood, and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.*

**T**he Church being before defaced by gross Hereticks and Errours, and kindled within by pride and contention: for, the Government amongst its Governours, is now set upon by an other mean, the rivers and fountains that were a little clear before, and these streams whereby the waters of life are conveyed, are made bitter, and, in stead of life, they convey death by being now corrupted.

In this trumpet we are to consider these three, 1. The judgement or ill that followed the Angels sounding. 2. The cause, I mean the instrumental cause, or rise of it, whence it flowed. 3. The effects of it.

1. The judgment or ill is, The corrupting of a third part of the waters, fountains and rivers. By fountains and rivers (which are the object) are understood the Doctrines of the Gospel, or the Covenant of Grace and Christs Offices, and the way of conveying and communicating the same to sinners by the Ordinances of the visible Church, called the wells of Salvation, Isaiah 12. 3. and called springs, or well springs, which GOD hath placed in his Church, and which are no where else, Psal. 87. ult. because there, and by it, the righteousness of God is revealed from Faith to Faith, Rom. 1. 17. And in Ezekiels vision these waters are said to stream and flow from under the altar, and out of the Sanctuary, Ezek. 47. 1, &c. and may well be compared to fountains, as the Church is called (Cant. 4.) *A spring shut up, a fountain sealed, and a fountain of gardens*, because of these waters springing in it, and because of the nature of them, which is clear, single, sweet and refreshing, as useful and necessary to spiritual life, as waters are to the bodily; and as having that use in the religious world, (which this is) which waters have in the natural; and also in respect of the manner of dispensing Grace in the Gospel so largely and so freely, wherefore it is compared to an open fountain to all Nations, Zech. 13. 1. and so, frequently folks are invited to drink freely, Isaiah 55. 1. and Revel. 22. 17, and to wash. By rivers, we understand the preaching and dispensing of this Gospel, whereby it is holden forth, and (as it were) floweth to others,

which two, are often put together, when the spreading of the Gospel is prophesied of, *I will open rivers in the wilderness, and fountains in the desert*, Isaiah 41. 17, 18. probably referring to the spreading of the Gospel amongst the Gentiles: so, corrupting of this word; is compared to mixing of liquor with something that is not of its kind, nor so good, as Vintners do adulterate wine, 2 Cor. 2. 17. opposit to the single and pure preaching of Christ which Paul used.

2. The instrumental cause of this which maketh the waters bitter, is set out three ways. 1. It is more generally called a Star, and a great Star burning like a lamp. 2. It is shown from whence this Star fell. 3. And more particularly, the name of the Star is called wormwood.

By stars (as we heard, Chap. 1. ver. 20.) are understood Ministers in the visible Church, who, by receiving light from Christ, should hold it forth to others: *a great star burning like a lamp*, is, one eminent for parts, gifts, place, or to estimation for holiness, making a great shew, yet not having much reality, but (as it were) a glancing counterfeit light, not proceeding from a right principle, as that of the Stars doth from the Sun, but kindled from some external thing as that of a Lamp is, nor so solide as the former, though having more glorious and pompous appearance. 2. This Star fell from Heaven, that is, made defection from the visible Church and the straight and pure preaching of the Gospel, and corrupted these fountains and waters; Error bringeth folks low, even from Heaven to Earth, as profanity doth; when this wild-fire of self-seeking is by pride kindled, and by parts and gifts without grace entertained, it soon bringeth down the greatest Star that taketh not its light from Christ. The word is, it was falling, not altogether fallen, as is spoken, Chap. 9. 1. to signify a begun decay, or fall, which afterward John discerned more clearly when it was fallen and come to its height, or rather lowness of a full decay: by it is shewed, that this plague is promoted by such as by their parts or former estimation have been eminent in the Church.

3. The name of the Star, is, *wormwood*, given him from the effect which it produceth, it having influence to corrupt the sweetest

sweetest things and to make them partake of its nature, *Deut.* 26. 18. It is spoken of a man that hath a root that beareth gall or wormwood, one that walked not straight by Gods rule: and *Act.* 8. 23. *Simon Magus* is said to be in the gall of bitterness for his corrupt thoughts of the grace of God; and it may well get this name, which hath so much influence upon fountains and rivers, that it may make them bitter like wormwood, that is, altereth their sweet nature, bringing in free will, the defection of the saints, the inefficacy of Grace, the Doctrine of merit and predestination upon foreseen works, or Faith, &c. whereby the nature of the Gospel is quite overturned, and that Doctrine which was healthful to be drunken in, is now like the Prophets pottage, having death in the pot, that none who would be unpoisoned dare drink of it, more than the *Egyptians* might drink of their rivers when they were turned into blood.

It is said to fall on a third part of the waters; either, 1. Because it was not a full defection from all truth, some were by Gods goodness kept clear. Or, 2. That this gross error, or this heresie, though it spread far, yet it did not infect all men; some prime men and Churches were kept free of it. Or, 3. Defection in these truths, was not then at its height, but growing. The effect is, *many men died*, &c. which is to be understood of spiritual and eternal death, following on the former corruptions, by which many were destroyed, like that which is mentioned in the former trumpet.

To come to the application of this, We, 1. take it for granted, that some Church-defection is signified by this, rather than the overturning of the civil state of the *Roman Empire*; for, the falling of the *Roman State* is not actively the cause of its own bitterness, that State being passive in its being overturned; and the bitterness floweth not from it as an agent, yet it is clear here, that this falling Star is the active agent, or instrument of imbittering these waters, as the hail and the burning mountain was in the two trumpets before: also the title *Star*, and the effects (as they are used in this prophesie) will agree best to Church-men and affairs, beside the scope whereof we have spoken.

2. This judgement differeth from the former two, 1. In its object; more immediatly it stricketh at the way of the Gospels manifesting grace. 2. In its rise; it is from some eminent preacher carrying it on with more rational eloquence, seeming reason, and pretext of holiness, or by moe preachers together. 3. In the manner of it; not by blood, nor mixing in persecution, as the former two had waiting on them, but by making the waters bitter, turning them into wormwood, which was by the infecting of them with the error itself. 4. That it falleth not on the earth, as *Chap.* 9. 1. because yet it was but working, and that Star not fully discovered as yet by this fall: and so here its a great Star; but (*Chap.* 9. 1.) a Star, only because he lost much of his splendor by the first fall, though we think it is the same fall begun here, and perfected there.

3. We take it for granted also, that this trumpet in its rise belongeth to that time that succeedeth the former contentions in the Church; when the Bishops and Clergie of *Rome* especially, were kindling both the Churches of the East, and in *Africa*, for their supremacy. This will be in the fifth Century a little after the 400. year: we may apply it generally to the state of the Church during that fifth Century, or particularly to some Hereticks in it: generally, Doctrine then was corrupted, not only by *Pelagius*, Anno 413. *Nestorius*, 429. *Eutyches*, about 448. and other gross Hereticks, and these errors exceedingly fomented by the powers of the world, especially that of the *Eutychians*; by *Anastasius* the Emperour, and a second Council at *Ephesus*, called *predatorium*, because of its infamous proceeding against *Flavianus*, and in favours of *Eutyches*, by *Dioscorus* means Bishop of *Alexandria*; for which it was protested against

as no Synod by *Anatolius*, and *Stevens*, men of *Asia*. But, which is more, though there were many eminent men who stood against these errors, yet a great decay of true doctrine crept in amongst good men, that never did wear out again, but grew still more in the Church, to wit, about satisfaction, penance, free-will, merit of works, possibility of fulfilling the Law, holy dayes, &c. This application in this last respect, we suppose safest, as foreshewing the Church, or Church-men generally to fall from true light, and to be kindled with zeal for superstitions; and though it did not in this age universally corrupt the Church in that height that followed, but a third part, i. e. many were kept free; yet, way was made to it, and the Churches declining, and fall was begun, which stayed not till afterward it came to its height. This agreeth to the story, considering the Doctrine of the Church at that time; and to the scope which sheweth the Churches decay by degrees, and Antichrists gradual rise, his Doctrine (though not his Supremacy) got much footing in this age; and also with the type here, 1. of a Star falling, which we will find as fallen, *Chap.* 9. 1. 2. It corrupteth fountains and streams, insensibly, not striking so directly at the foundation as the former particular heresies did, but keeping the doctrine of the Trinity and Person of Christ pure, as *Gregorius Roma.* did, but miscarrying in the nature of his Offices, and his executing of them: it corrupteth mainly by adding unto, and mixing somewhat with truth, yet such addition as altereth the nature of them; such are the Popish additions of merits, penances, indulgences, mediators, and intercessions of Saints, and Angels, &c. whereby that which was, is not removed, but by this addition corrupted. 3. It cometh from stars in heaven, and riseth more from within than the former: thus being applied, it relateth to no particular heresie, but to the general decay of the Church. If it be necessary to be applied to one, I incline to apply it to *Pelagius* and his heresie more than any other, for these reasons. It agreeth, 1. In the time; he began under *Arcadius* and *Honorius*, about the year 415. or according to some, 405. 2. He was of great parts, and was once thought a good zealous man, and was advanced to Ecclesiastical orders. 3. The nature of that Heresie was not against Christs Person, but his Offices, teaching corruptly of Nature, Sin, Grace, Faith, Justification, Election, &c. subtilly undermining grace. 4. It spread exceedingly through *Italy*, *Britain*, *France*, *Africa*, and the eastern Empire, &c. yet some were kept free of it, and great Lights set themselves against it, as *Augustine*, *Hieronymus*, *Prosper*, *Optatus*, &c. 5. It entered and continued in a great measure in the Church of *Rome*, and the dregs of it sticketh to the Popish writers in their free will, perfection of righteousness, &c. to this day: for, though the natures and person of our Lord be kept free by them; yet their Doctrine enervateth his Offices, and maketh them bitter to all that would drink thereof, which are the special springs of Grace in the Gospel; they put in other satisfactions, other mediators, others with Authority to add and diminish from what he hath commanded, other Officers to teach, and other matter to be taught, than he hath instituted, as traditions, &c. which being the rise of much Antichristian Doctrine still retained by them, it agreeth best with the scope to be thus applied. Hence,

1. See here the nature and usefulness of pure Doctrine, and what men ought to think of it and how to use it; to drink it in as fountain water, and to wash and make clean at it, it is as profitable to souls, and they cannot live without it; and when they want it, they want that which both purgeth and maketh them grow.

Observe, 2. the ill of error; it corrupteth the Truths of the Gospel, and maketh the sweetest, and best things bitter, it removeth them not professedly, but poysoneth them so, that it is better to forbear than to drink in such waters.



3. See what the nature and native office and place of *Ministers*, and what advantage they are, while they keep their station; they are like stars and great Stars, exceedingly useful and profitable in their place. And upon the other hand, what a fore judgement and plague is it, when Ministers fall from receiving light from Christ, and are infected, they are most hurtful. 4. The more parts and the better mens life be that are infected, they are the bitterer, and do the more wrong: as the corruption of the best things is worst, so is the corruption of eminent men, 2 Cor. 2. ult. 5. Error venteth not still after one way; now it corrupteth more subtly than it did in the former trumpets; there is no blood nor fire here, though it be as dangerous: often contentions for dominion in Government have more fire and heat than disputes about more fundaméntal truths. 6. There may be much glancing, false, and counterfeit light, both among Ministers and Professors; where there is little solidity: it is not all gold that glisters in them; It is good light that cometh from a right principle within; it is good when a mans works shine, as his gifts shine. This would teach us not to admire gifts; many make a fair shew in the flesh, and if their light and parts were well tried by the effects, they might be called wormwood that imbittereth the waters; torches that do glance, but not stars. Observe, 7. That men of great gifts, fair professions and blameless lives, may fall very

foolly, while they are not solide and sincere, they may fall as it were from heaven, so may particular Churches: there is no state nor degree of any state exempted when error breaketh in. Therefore the more gifts and parts men have, they have the more need to be humble and to fear and tremble considering many experiences both of former ages and of this, which should make us take heed lest we fall, and infect or be infected, such were once *Pelagius*, yea, *Socinus*, *Swinkfeldius*, and *Arminius*, thought to be. 8. Error when it infecteth Ministers, or Professors, bringeth death with it, as well as prophanity; when this star falleth from heaven, and poisoneth the waters, many die: he that teacheth men to break the least command, shall be least in the Kingdom of heaven, *Matth. 5*. O that men in this time thought on this, that error bringeth to hell, as well as Adultery, that it is like rebellion and witchcraft; It is like the grossest evil, and worse: it inciteth teacheth and incourageth to break the commands of God, and there is much cruelty done to souls in tolerating of these. 9. The Church sustaineth no greater prejudice often, in corrupting of her Doctrine, than by the falls and slips of eminent men: these spots are hardly removed, because they sink deeper. 10. Every corruption and plague hath its degrees and steps. 11. It is a signe of a decaying Church, when eminent men fall, and it is a great judgement to others.

## LECTURE V.

Ver. 12. *And the fourth Angel sounded, and the third part of the Sun was smitten, and the third part of the Moon, and the third part of the Stars, so as the third part of them was darkened: and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.*

13. *And I beheld, and heard an Angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Wo, wo, wo, to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three Angels which are yet to sound.*

**T**He fourth Angel with his trumpet, bringeth the last of the four lesser woes (it is greater than the former, yet lesser than these that immediately ensue) which clearly doth relate to that age immediately going before Antichrists discovery, and so falleth betwixt this time and the sixth Century. This is set down, ver. 12. And the 13. ver. is a preface and introduction to the three great woes, which the last three Angels bring.

There are but two things mentioned in this fourth trumpet. 1. The judgement or type, It is a *smiting of the third part of the Sun, Moon, and Stars*. 2. The effect of this judgement, is a following darkness suitable to it, *and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise*: because the Sun that giveth light by day, and the Moon and Stars that give light by night, they were all darkened and smitten. There is no word of any particular cause, or mean, whereby the Sun was smitten, as under the former trumpets was mentioned. By *Sun, Moon, and Stars*, we understand, and comprehend under them, light of all sorts, such as is the purity of Doctrine in the Word, compared to light, *Psal. 119. 105*. And 2 Pet. 1. 19. the Word of prophesie is called a *light that shineth in a dark place*: and so it may be, seeing Christ who is the Sun of Righteousness shineth therein, *Mal. 4*. And by the spreading of the Gospel, is said to arise, for the direction and comfort of his people, (see also *Matth. 4. 16*.) or also, the light of order, comelines, and a good conversation in the power of godliness, as *Phil. 2. 15*. and *Matth. 5. 17*. So the Church (*Cant. 6*.) is called *fair*, as the Moon, and the Ministers compared to Stars, and

the general beauty of the Church is prophesied of in these terms, *Isa. 30. 26*. *The light of the Moon shall be as the light of the Sun, and the light of the Sun as the light of seven days*: and consequently, the diminishing and contracting of these lights, must be the declining and decaying of light in the Church, both in respect of purity of Doctrine, when it is darkened, and simplicity of Worship and Power in practice; these by humane traditions and ceremonies and superstitions, are quite dimmed, eclipsed and darkened. A third part is but smitten and darkened, and shineth not, which is in comparison of the total eclipse following under the fifth trumpet, when the Sun is wholly darkened, *Chap. 9. ver. 1*. this is higher and of larger extent than the former, yet less than these that follow in degree, but little odds in kind from the fifth. It differeth from the former as being of larger extent, affecting the Sun and light in a greater degree; also, in respect there is no particular instrument named; the reason is, because it relateth to no particular heresie, or defection, different from the former, or that which followeth, nor to no particular heretick, but is a further and higher degree and step of that same declining, flowing not from without, but from within, insensibly growing by a general declining till it come to the top in the following trumpets.

The reasons why we apply it to the sixth Century, are from considering of the story, where it is clear, that in that age light was exceedingly (though not fully) darkened: and many things remarkable suit this type. As 1. that there was no particular heresie, nor prime heretick in all that Century, though former heresies (as that of *Arius*, *Eutyches*, &c.) spread more, yet

yet there was no particular heretick that arose to be instrumental in this darkening, as in the former there was, to wit, *Pelagius*, *Nestorius* Bishop of *Constantinople* and *Eutyches*. See *Cent. 6.* Preface, and *Cap. 1.2.* That though there was no heretick, yet there was a great & general decay of simple purity, both in Doctrine, Worship, Government and practice (as in that Century may be seen, in *Gregorius* his life by *Platina*) monasteries, superstitious dayes, doctrine of works, and traditions encreased, &c. See *Cent. 6. cap. 1. & 7.* where the building of Abbacies, deserting of Marriages, even by Kings and Queens for devotion, is mentioned. 3. That light and knowledge was very low now in the Church; few able men are marked to have lived in this Century: which certainly sheweth great decay of light, they being lights to the world: There are but two eminently marked, *Falgentius* and *Gregorius Magnus*, who though in some things against the *Arians* and *Eutychians*, &c. they do well; yet in many things their infirmity and declining from purity, especially of the last, appeareth, and yet never was there in *Rome* be far such a Bishop after him in any respect; he is called the worst of these, who went before him, and the best of these who followed. 4. That old heresies by that occasion did thrive well, the *Eutychians* especially. 5. *Anastasius* the Emperour he countenanced this heresie, and though before his coronation he subscribed to the *Nicean* and *Chalcedon* faith, whereby this heresie was condemned; yet after he retracted, and became a great persecuter, banishing and cutting off many able honest Ministers, especially *Euphemius* who crowned him (because he refused to give back his subscription, and would not admit him to Communicate, as infected with heresie) and also *Macedonius* his successor and sundry others, for not admitting the *apostasia* he had appointed; some acriter impugnantes, alii imprudensius defendentes *Concilium Nicenum*, faith the story.

He would not have had that Council mentioned, because it condemned his tenent. 6. This age is remarkable from the pride and practice of *John* Bishop of *Constantinople*, who, by the consent (as it seemeth) of *Mauritius* the Emperour, and the Bishops of the East, took on him the name of *universal Bishop* and *Patriarch*: and what followed upon that, may be seen at large in the writings of *Gregorius* Bishop of *Rome*, Where these things are clear, 1. That there was a decay of zeal and humility amongst Bishops, by their busying themselves in things of the world. 2. That the title of *universal Bishop*, was accounted a sure mark of Antichrist, derogating from all other Bishops, as if one only were a Bishop, and a stile that no Apostle, even *Peter* did ever assume. 3. He concluded, that Antichrist was near, seeing a Priest so exalted himself, and (which is hard to be said) he should have an Army of Priests ready to advance him: for (saith he) what is Antichrists exalting himself above all that is called god in this world, and sitting in his Temple as God, but a Priest lifting up himself above all his fellow-priests, which is to take Christs Chaire? as by considering these places is manifest, 4 *Epist. 32, 34, 35, 38. ad Johannem Constant.* where these words are, *Rex superbie prope est, & quod dici nefas est, Sacerdotum preparatus est exercitus, quia cervici militans superbia, &c.* And again, *lib. 7. Epist. 30. ad Mauritium Aug.* *Ego autem fidenter dico, quia quisque se universalem Episcopum aut Sacerdotem vocat, vel vocari desiderat in relatione sua, Antichristum praecurrat, qui superbiendo se ceteris*

praeponit. And (as he said, *Epist. 34. lib. 4. ad Constantium Augustum*) he imitareth the devil in seeking to be above his Collegues. These things belonging to the same time that the series of the prophesie falleth into, and agreeing so well to the type in the Text, and to the succeeding trumpet, It seemeth clearly applicable to it, especially considering that these debates made way exceedingly for the Bishop of *Rome*, and his stepping up where the Bishop of *Constantinople* would have been, and endeavoured to be.

In the 13. vers. before the fifth Angel sound, there is a little interruption made to *John*, to prepare him for it, *An Angel flying through the midst of heaven*, that is, so as he might be best heard, having a sad proclamation *wo, wo, wo*, repeated thrice according to the number of the Angels that were yet to sound, that every one of them were to bring an harder and greater wo to the men of the earth, than any thing that had befallen them under the former four: and whether we take these woes, as denouncing judgement, or as lamenting over the earth for what was coming, as if he did say, *Alace, alace, alace*, it turneth to one thing, there were great woes coming. It is clear here. 1. That interruptions for *John's* clearing, are not inconsistent with this prophesie. 2. That there is an order of time in the woes of the trumpets; these three have order, and follow the former four. 3. That the next trumpet is not the *Saracens*; neither do the former look mainly to the *Goths*, &c. because it will appear in story, that the Empire suffered more from the *Goths*, and these other barbarous Nations, than it did from the *Saracens*, as they are distinguished from the *Turks*: so in that way of interpretation, there is not that remarkable and palpable gradation to be found, which is implied amongst these woes. Some apply this to *Gregorius*, because of his prediction foresaid, and the words agree well to his time: but this Angel foretelleth three woes, and he did but foretel one at most. It is like therefore that no person is signified by this Angel in particular; but, the Lord by it giveth *John*, and by him, others, warning, that there were sadder things coming after the first four had come. Hence,

*Observe*, 1. The nature of Truth and Error; the one is like light, the other like darknesse; the one comfortable and profitable, the other comfortlesse and hurtful. *Obs.* 2. The nature of declining among Ministers and Professours in a Church is such, that, when once begun, it groweth. *Obs.* 3. The nature of judgements, when once inflicted they ordinarily pursue a person or people, and the greatest come last: when people abuse the light, it draweth on the darkening of it by degrees, and it resteth not till it come to a height. Unthankfulness for the Gospel, and not receiving the Truth in love, provoke God to give up to strong delusion, to believe lies, 2 *Thes. 2. 11, 12.* *Obs.* 4. Gods way of dealing with His people, in giving warning before the judgement come, that these three great plagues come not on them unawares; He warneth, that folks may repent, and His own may be armed ere judgement come. 5. The Angel pronounceth a wo thrice, *Observe*, That spiritual judgements or offences, have many woes in them; and warnings against them would be doubled, and tripled, and cryed with a loud voice: for, when once such judgements sease upon people, they get not easily out from under them, and are not easily affected with them Therefore is the wo proclaimed thrice and so loud.



## LECTURE I.

## CHAP. IX.

**Verf. 1.** **A**ND the fifth Angel sounded, and I saw a Star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless-pit.

2. And he opened the bottomless-pit, and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace, and the Sun and the Air were darkened, by reason of the smoke of the pit.

3. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth, and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power:

4. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

5. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he stricketh a man.

6. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it, and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

7. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses, prepared unto battel, and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.

8. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.

9. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battel.

10. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails, and their power was to hurt men five months.

11. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless-pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Appollyon.



He fifth Angel soundeth here, where the first of the greatest woes is brought in; of what dreadful nature it is, the woes that are pre-faced to the sounding of it may declare. It will concern the opening of all, to consider of what wo this judgment speaketh particularly, and to what it relateth. It is more largely described than any of the former, because the tentation of it was most dangerous, and the effects thereof of more concernment to the Church.

1. The object of this judgment, is, the same Church, or Christian world, whereupon the effects of the former trumpets did fall; for, these last three do signifie greater degrees of wrath upon these who had despised and abused the former lesser woes.

2. The Christian world is obscured by the trumpets, and the Antichristian brought in its place, as was said at the entry to the trumpets: for, the Antichristian world is in being after the sixth trumpet, when the vials begin; it must therefore have attained that being under the trumpets, and especially under the immediate foregoing trumpets; seeing the seventh findeth it at its height: and so consequently, the Christian world (*i. e.* the pure Church) must be decaying under these trumpets, where the Antichristian cometh to its being (seeing two of these worlds cannot consist together) yea, the Church must be

lowest, and decline most under these trumpets, wherein Antichrist groweth most, and cometh to the greatest height, as under these first two great woes it must be. Whence we may gather, 1. That the Church is here the object of this plague. 2. That Antichrist must grow under these trumpets, and particularly under this, it being a further step of the same kind of plague, and the sixth finding Idolatry under Antichrist at a height, which it plagueth, it must then grow here. 3. This first great wo, bringeth spiritual plagues and tyranny upon this world, by this King and his Armies, who advance that Idolatry. The sixth bringeth temporal judgments on the same persons, for whoring from God, and receiving this idolatrous worship.

For further clearing of this, we say, 1. It is not any temporal judgment by Armies (such as the sixth trumpet holdeth forth, to wit, one of a mixed nature) such as came by the Saracens, for, that would not be so far greater than the former woes of that kind, as is said. 2. These locusts are but called *as horses*, or, like horses *v. 7.* not horses themselves, as is expressly said of these under the sixth trumpet, thereby giving us to know that there is something of their nature signified, rather than what is literally expressed. 3. Their power is not *to kill*, as in the sixth trumpet, but *to hurt men* and torment them spiritually, and not to kill them bodily, as *vers. 3.* 4. These are secluded and exempted from this plague, that were sealed and

and marked, to wit, the Elect, Gods servants; but these were not excluded from temporal plagues, (as appeareth, *Chap. 11.*) nor from that of the *Saracens*: often they share most under these, and these marked ones are all such as were written in the Lambs book, *Chap. 13. 8.* who yet did partake deeply of outward afflictions. 5. These troubles (*Chap. 11.*) belong expressly to this trumpet, though continuing under the sixth, and contemporary with it; yet they belong not to it, but to this: for, these troubles are upon the Saints by way of persecution: the sixth hath judgment on ungodly professors by way of justice. 6. All the circumstances will clear this further, as the mean by whom, a *Star*, his opening the bottomless-pit, the darkening of the Sun, &c. as after will appear: for these locusts do darken light, and obscure truth; which sheweth it is a spiritual evil on Religious things, springing up from within the Church, which also answereth the scope of these trumpets best, as is said.

2. We say further, the rising and discovering of Antichrist and the fall of the *Roman Bishops*, from Heaven to Earth (though not at first at their height) is the very thing foretold here, and must be so. 1. Because it is clear, that the beasts (mentioned *Chap. 13.*) are to be understood of him, and speak of the rise of Antichrist particularly, as may then be made out; but this agreeth to that, and is the very same War, and event, though in different expressions: For, 1. The very same persons are overcome by both, to wit, these that are not sealed. 2. The same persons are exempted from both, to wit, these sealed ones, *Chap. 9. 4. Chap. 13. 8. and 14. 1, &c.* 3. The same mark keepeth both free, the same seal of God. And, 4. The number is the same, comparing *Chap. 7.* in that number and *Chap. 14. 2.* 2. That the 11. Chapter and these troubles do belong to the Antichrist, it is clear, *vers. 7.* the witnesses are to be killed by the beast, and what beast but that, *Chap. 13.* (which ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, as the locusts do here) and that, *Chap. 11.* belongeth to this trumpet, appeareth from *vers. 14.* where it is said, the second wo is past, and the third wo cometh quickly. Then all preceeding that, belongeth to the first, or the second wo; But not to the second, as hath been said, Therefore to the first, which indeed in this event is contemporary with the second, to wit, the sixth trumpet. It may be also further cleared from the circumstances, considering the time, rise and progress, and by comparing it with the fifth vial, which is poured out (*Chap. 16.*) on the beasts seat: and this order is observed in all, what is builded of Antichrists Kingdom by the trumpets, is overturned by the vials, and in that same order. It would then appear, that seeing the fifth vial overturneth his throne, that it was setled by the fifth trumpet.

A third reason, is, if that storm against which the one hundred forty and four thousand (*Chap. 7.*) are sealed, be the spiritual defection of the Church under Antichrist, Then that which is holden forth by this trumpet is so also; for, both relate to the same storm; but that (*Chap. 7.*) is to be understood of Antichrists reign, as the greatest evil the Church was to meet with, after Heathenish persecution, Therefore this must be so also. What was said upon *Chap. 7.* for clearing the scope of that place, will confirm both these propositions.

4. This spiritual Kingdom, described here, must either be applied to the Kingdom of Antichrist and that Hierarchy, or it must be applicable to some other; (seeing it is some spiritual plague arising within the Church) But there can be no other thought of, to whom this description can agree, and in whom this spiritual wo, (exceedingly beyond any mentioned by the former trumpets) can be fulfilled, but the Kingdom of Antichrist; Therefore that must be understood here.

Again, it being clear, that it is one and the same world or Church which is overturned by the first six trumpets, and it

being clear, that the sixth trumpet following findeth Idolatry in the visible Church, (which is the world plagued by it) It must therefore follow, that this defection to Idolatry (which is a character of the Antichrists defection) must have increased under this fifth trumpet immediately preceeding, seeing it was not during the former four.

Lastly, It may be confirmed further by comparing this Chapter with 2 *Thess. 2.* by which we will find, that this plague mentioned here, is the same spiritual Antichristian delusion prophesied of there: for in every material thing they agree. As, 1. the instrument, there is one sitting in the Temple of God, as having place in the Church of Christ; here is a *Star falling from Heaven*, intimating the same thing. 2. There, he is called *ὁ ἀντιχρίστου*, as opposit to Christ, and *ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας*, or the son of perdition; here he is called *ἀπολλύων*, or the destroyer, as opposed to Christ, who is called a Saviour; as also (*Chap. 17.* of this prophesie) he is said to go *εἰς ἀπώλειαν*, or to destruction, himself; for, Antichrist, as *Chrysostome* observeth in that 2 *Thess.* is called the son of perdition, because he shall occasion the destruction of many, and shall himself be destroyed. 3. They agree in respect of these whom they plague: 2 *Thess. 2. 10.* it is only these that shall be damned, whom that delusion carrieth away; here (*vers. 4.*) it is only these who are not marked, that is to say (*Chap. 13. 8.*) who are not written in the Lambs Book of life; and so also it sealeth only finally upon the Reprobate. 4. There, they are given up to strong delusion to believe lies; here, they are carried away with fornications, idolatries and other errors, and are so hardened therein, that although they be plagued for these by the sixth trumpet, yet they repent not. 5. That delusion (2 *Thess. 2.*) hath its rise from the devil, *vers. 9.* and is carried on with mighty signes and wonders; here, It cometh from the bottomless-pit, and is carried on by the devils special minister, who therefore is said to have the key thereof, and is not without mighty signes and lying wonders, as is clear from *Chap. 13.* following, where the same Kingdom is under another consideration described. From all which considerations we may gather,

1. That each of these trumpets doth not contain the story of an equal time, or number of years; for, the matter contained in any of the last three trumpets, will be found to be of longer continuance than all the first four, which (added to the greatness of the matter contained in them) may be the reason why they are differenced from the former four, as the greater woes.

2. It appeareth also, that by the fifth and sixth trumpets we are to understand different evils and enemies; and so they cannot both be applicable either to Antichrist only, or Mahumetans only.

3. We may gather also, that this Kingdom and Army, with the furniture wherewith they are provided, and the effects which follow upon their tyranny, are not properly to be understood of external battels and bodily evils, but figuratively, as representing some great spiritual hurt on the Church and her Ordinances. These expressions, *they are like horses, and had breast-plates, as it were breast-plates, &c.* whereby they are expressly differenced from the trumpet following, wherein expressions that are properly to be understood, are used, do intimate this.

4. Supposing (which afterward from *Chap. 11, 13, and 17.* will be more clear) that the Roman Hierarchy, complexly taken, is the Kingdom of Antichrist; and that the deluding of the world by them, is the very delusion prophesied of, 2 *Thess. 2.* It will necessarily follow, that this Romish Antichristian Kingdom (whereby the visible Church hath been long brought in bondage) is the very same set forth by this trumpet.



To come more particularly to the description of this Kingdom (for, a Kingdom it is) as it is set down in the words, in its rise and growth, we will find it many ways insisted upon, 1. A Star falleth from heaven, and becometh earthly; upon that again followeth corruption of doctrine, whereupon doth arise a rabble of superstitious Church-men, whose work is to propagate and support the dominion of their King, as his care is to strengthen and increase them, there being such mutual concernment in the standing or falling of each to other.

*Vers. 1.* The first particular described, is, the fountain and great instrument of all this spiritual plague, that is, *I saw a Star fall from heaven unto the earth.* That by *Star* is meant some person, the words after do clear: *To him*, that is, to the *Star was given*, &c. That it must be some Church-officer, is also clear from *Chap. 1. 20.* from our Lord Jesus His own exposition: and considering what power this *Star* hath in the world, it must hold forth some eminent Church-officer. By *Heaven*, is understood here (as frequently in this Book) the visible Church, which is the Heaven wherein Christ hath placed Apostles, Pastors and Teachers as Stars to give light, because the Church is furnished with heavenly privileges, heavenly light of Doctrine, and ought to be of heavenly conversation in respect of the rest of the world. By *Earth* is understood earthliness, or the rest of the world, as contradistinguished from the Church, which the opposition cleareth; and thus, *Earth* signifieth worldly designs, worldly grandour, corrupt doctrine, liker to that of Heathens than that of Christ, carnalness in conversation, and such like: for, this *Earth* is something contradistinguished from, and opposed to, the Heaven formerly mentioned. *To fall here from heaven unto earth*, signifieth a declining from the one to the other. And so in sum, the meaning of this part of the Verse will be, I foresaw the defection of some eminent Church-officer (who once had place in the visible Church) from Christian simplicity, purity and holiness in Doctrine and Conversation, to a Religion and way of living by superstitions, Idolatries and external pomp, becoming rather the men of the world, and liker their way than a Minister of Christ.

By this phrase also (*I saw a star fall, &c.*) is implied, 1. Not only a declining and defection, but such a declining as maketh him that was before a Star in Heaven, to cease from being considered in that relation, and afterward to be accounted as but eminent amongst the men of the world, because of their worldly earth-like Religion and Worship. Upon which ground, the followers of this Antichristian Kingdom, are called *Gentiles*, *Chap. 11. 2.* 2. This phrase importeth a visible and palpable step of this defection: the *Star* is not now falling, as was in the former Chapter; but it is fallen. And *I saw it fallen*, saith *John*, implying an observableness in it. 3. It importeth, that after the fall of this *Star*, and defection of this eminent Church-officer, he continued still in the account of a *Star* among the men of the world: he is called a *Star*, even after his fall, though indeed, and in *John's* account he be but a fallen *Star* and earthly, as having indeed forfeited his former Church-relation.

The second thing described, is, the power given unto this fallen *Star*, *And to him was given the keys of the bottomless-pit.* *Keys* signifie in Scripture, Authority and Power. By the *bottomless-pit*, is meant Hell, as is unquestionable, *Chap. 1. 18.* Christ is said to have the keys of Hell and Death, that doth signifie His supreme Authority: *Chap. 13. 2, 4.* the devil is said to have power, and to give it to the beast; because, in Gods secret Wisdom and Justice, the execution of His judgments in part is committed to the devil, and he is employed as supreme head of the wicked therein, and for that cause is said to have a throne, and is permitted to rule over the children of disobedience: here, this *Star* partaketh of this Authority, not as Christ hath it (for now, being fallen from Heaven, he hath lost rela-

tion to Him) nor in that same degree as the Devil doth; but as deputy and leiv-tenant to Him, who in Gods secret Justice furnisheth him with this power, as from *Chap. 13. 2, 4.* is clear. In a word, while he was in Heaven he exercised Christs Authority, and in that respect had the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Now, being fallen, he continueth to exercise Authority, and to retain a key, but of a quite contrary nature, to wit, of the bottomless pit, and to serve another master, to wit, the devil, as the exercise of his Authority tending now to the advancement of ignorance, darkness, superstition, and Idolatry in the Church, and being assisted with the power of Hell for that end: for, as Christs Ministers are said to have keys from Him, and when they warrantably exercise them, it is the opening of Heaven; So promoters of Heresie, being Ministers of Satan, *2 Cor. 11.* (though they think it not) of whom Antichrist is the chief, he hath the key of the pit, that is, an Authority not allowed by Christ, nor from above: and the opening of the pit with the key, is the putting of that assumed power in execution; such is spreading of corrupt Doctrine, called therefore *doctrines of devils*, *1 Tim. 4. 1.* and authorizing men to propagate these without Christs call, who are therefore called Ministers of Satan. This key is said to be given him: which doth not imply a warrantable call; But, 1. the great change which followed upon his fall, and the exercise of his power in respect of what it was, he getteth now another key in his hand. 2. An usurpation of the person acting, and promoting the designs of Hell, in a way of Authority, as if that key had been intrusted to him. 3. It implieth a prime Ministerial office (to say so) which he hath from the devil, who doth account of, and acknowledge him, as primely subservient to his designs, and a subordination of this key-bearer unto him, who hath given him this trust, *Chap. 13. 2, 4.* Lastly, It implieth a wife and just, though a secret, overruling providence of God, ordering this subordinate Authority of Antichrist for His wife ends, as He doth the dominion of the devil, whom He permitteth sovereignly (as it were) in respect of the other to bear a kind of rule.

*Vers. 2.* The exercise of this power is set down with three effects following thereupon, *vers. 2, 3.* *And he opened the bottomless-pit*, that is, as he was employed by the devil, and permitted by God to assume an Authority for the advantage of Hell, so did he instantly exercise his power for that end, and left nothing unassayed for bringing superstition and Idolatry out of the bottomless pit: where it was formerly restrained, now it is letten loose, as appeareth by the effects. The first whereof, is, *There arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace.* What is to be understood by this *smoke*, the second effect following upon this, to wit, *darkening of the Sun and the Air*, will make it appear: for, by *Sun* and *Air* are understood here, the light and purity of the Doctrine of Christ, which shined clearly and comfortably in the Primitive Church. The third part of this light was smitten by the fourth trumpet, *Chap. 8. 12.* Now, by this fifth trumpet this darkness spreadeth, and the whole *Sun* and also the *Air* is darkened, which holdeth forth a greater degree of corruption in Doctrine, than was under the former: it began then, but now is at a height. This being then the meaning of darkening the *Sun* and *Air*, this *smoke*, which bringeth forth this effect, must be these corrupt and superstitious Doctrines, and increasing of humane traditions and ceremonies, whereby the light of the Truth of God was obscured. This is compared to a *great smoke*, 1. Because error and superstition, though it seemeth to be something fit to devotion (as smoke is to fire) yet is really not only without light and heat, but also is onerous and hurtful, as smoke is. 2. Because the darkness which error and superstition inferreth upon the Truth of God, doth not corrupt it in it self, more than smoke can darken the *Sun*; but doth by ceremonies

monies and traditions darken it to us, as great smoke doth the Sun to onlookers. Again, this smoke is said to be as of a *great furnace* from the bottomlesse pit, to shew, that the defection of Antichrist consisteth not in one particular error, but (as it were) an inundation of errors ascending together. 2. To shew, that whatever the Authors pretended, Yet the rise of these superstitions were from Hell, as in the forecited place, *1 Tim. 4. 2, 3.* superstitious traditions, and errors concerning Meats and Marriages (Doctrines much esteemed of among Papists) are particularly by the Apostle attributed unto devils.

*Vers. 3.* The third effect following upon these two, *v. 3.* And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth, a vermine, (as it were,) engendered by the former corruptions; these, as being of special concernment in the Antichristian Kingdom, are largely and particularly described. That these locusts were men; yea, that they were pretended Church-men, promoters of error and superstition, appeareth from this, that they stand in subordination to Antichrist, and in a Monarchick way are governed by Abaddon, *vers. 11.* and must therefore be servants suitable to such a master, and members conform to such a head. They are said to come out of the smoke, because oftentimes corruption of Doctrine begetteth corrupt Teachers to promote the same, as we see in *Jeroboam, 2 Chron. 11. 14, 15.* and *2 Tim. 4. 3.* the rejecting of sound Doctrine and heaping up Teachers after mens own lusts, are put together; for, a spirit of error loveth to innovate in respect of Officers, as well as Doctrine, and by it people are some way disposed to strange Teachers; and also for promoting new tenents, they are necessitated to make use of them. However the scope and sum of the prophesie is thus, that the beginning of Antichrists kingdom shall be by an eminent Church-officers, who, falling from the right exercise of Ministerial Authority in subordination to Christ, to be a promoter of the devils designs, and subservient to him, he shall bring in such abundance of ceremonies, superstitions and errors upon the Church which shall obscure the clear Doctrine and simplicity of the Gospel, whereby numbers of false Teachers, and orders shall be established, which our Lord Jesus hath never warranted. They are compared to locusts, 1. Because of their number, as Antichrist shall bring in many errors, so shall he multiply Teachers, who shall live and converse together in the world like swarms of locusts. 2. To set forth their nature, and that both in respect of their worthlesse, and also of their hurtfulness unto the Church, this being the nature of locusts to consume and destroy where they come, so that a land pleasant like *Eden* before them, is brought by them to a desolate wilderness, *Jos. 2. 3.* &c. compared with *Chap. 1. 4.* These orders and teachers shall even do so with the Church: yea, the increasing of them is marked here, as a part of Antichrists superstition, as a fruit of former corrupting of Doctrine, and as a mids to carry on that corruption to a height; by which we may see, that the altering or inventing of new Officers in the Church, is of no little concernment. By these locusts, we conceive clearly to be holden forth the many invented orders and superstitious rabble of these called the Clergie of the Church of Rome, who not being plants of our heavenly Fathers planting, but purposely brought into to promote and support the worldly grandour of that Hierarchie, and did flow from superstitious principles brought in upon the Church; and so are to be accounted as locusts, having their rise from the bottomlesse pit, which their description will more fully clear.

The first part of their description (beside their rise already spoken of) is the power that was given them, which is these four wayes set forth, 1. Generally, *vers. 3.* unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power, &c. Scorpions are a dangerous and subtle sort of Serpents; these look like locusts, but sting like scorpions, that is, dangerously and subtilly, their

hurt being beyond their appearance, by their cunning insilling poisonous Doctrine: their having of power given them, doth not import lawful authorizing of them, but, as was said of their head, *vers. 1.* they want not commission, but that is given them by the Angel of the bottomlesse pit, who doth formally authorize and create these orders, and prescribeth rules unto them, so that even his Officers and Ministers have order among them, and assume not commission and calling (although to superstitious orders) of themselves. This is fully made out in the Popes way of founding, creating, commissioning, &c. by his bulls, patents and other writs (as they give them names) of all orders, whereof many hundreds are in that Kingdom; all which have their dependence on him, owe their being to his Authority, and are regulated by the Laws and Commissions given them from him.

*Vers. 4.* The second way how their power is described, is, *v. 4.* where their Commission is bounded and ordered in these two respects, 1. In respect of these they shall not hurt; it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, &c. whereby is understood (as is clear by the opposition following) the Elect or sealed ones. This command cometh not from their immediate superiour, to wit, the Angel of the bottomlesse pit, but proceedeth from the Lords Sovereignty, in order to the fulfilling of what was foretold, *Chap. 7.* Again, the proper objects unto whom their power reacheth, are set down, to wit, but only these men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads, that is, these who are not elected: here the end of Christs sealing, and the advantage of it doth appear, and also who they are upon whom the delusion of Antichrist hath full victory.

*Vers. 5.* 3. Their power or Commission is described further in a twofold limitation, *v. 5.* 1. And it was given to them that they should not kill them, that is, that their plaguing of men should not be directly by taking away the bodily life (as the horse-men under the sixth trumpet have, *v. 18.*) but must be understood of another sort of plague as afterward. If any say that Antichrist is said to kill, *Chap. 11. 13. 17.* and so, how can this be said of him? *Ans.* We may consider Antichrist in a twofold respect, 1. In respect of the Elect: 2. In respect of hypocritical Professours in the Church. In respect of the first, Antichrist is here limited from killing them spiritually, but in these places he is permitted to kill them bodily. On the contrary again, in respect of the second, Antichrist doth not take away the life bodily of these that submit to him, but he provera spiritual plague unto them. Now, if we consider him in the first sense, as he killeth the Elect, Antichrist is not the plague of the world; but in the second sense, as souls are endangered by him. And therefore this being a threatening of sending him as a plague to the hypocrites of the Church, his proper commission in reference to them is only set down. 2. This limitation may be put in, to shew the proper work of these locusts, which should not be professedly to take away bodily lives themselves (from which, as to its act, the Romish Clergie doth superstitiously pretend to abstain, although they be deep in bloody contrivances) but that their native work should be the destroying of souls. The second limitation in this Verse, is in respect of the time; it is not for ever, but for five months. We understand it indefinitely for a considerable long time, yet a time that is bounded by the Lord and will have an end, as (*Ezek. 39. 12.*) seven months are to be taken also. It is probable that particularly five months are mentioned, because ordinarily locusts continued to destroy during five months, as it is written of them; for, beginning in April, they died in September. If we should aim to be more definite in applying in this time, it would but prove more troublesome, and uncertain, than satisfying or edifying.



The last thing wherein their power or commission is described, is, in the nature of the plague it self, that is, it was not that they should kill men, but that *men should be tormented, &c.* This torment in the greatnesse of it, is aggregated by a similitude in the end of the fifth Verse, *their torment was as the torment of a scorpion*, which is a grievous, dangerous, and vexing torment.

*Vers. 6.* The second aggravation, is, *v. 6.* from the effect of this, *Men shall seek death, and shall not find it, and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.* In sum it is this, their anxiety shall be so great, as shall make them weary of their life (as we see often good men wish for death under great anxiety of spirit, not as death is considered in it self, but as usually it is accounted an end to prevent vexations, as *Job* and *Jonah*) and yet death shall not prove comfortable to them; but death (that is, a quieting death which they desire) shall flee from them, and thoughts of death shall breed a new terrour to them. For understanding this, two things are to be observed, 1. That it is not bodily torment which the Text speaketh of but Spiritual anxiety and inward vexation of spirit, and that such as natively floweth from the practices and doctrine of these locusts: For, 1. this torment is on the friends and native subjects of this Kingdom, whom these under-officers do not pretend willingly to torment. 2. Their power is not to kill bodily, and therefore not to torment bodily.

The second thing to be observed, is, that nothing doth more natively breed anxiety and spiritual torment than the principles contained in the Popish Doctrine, and propagated by these who are signified by these locusts. And therefore seeing the spreaders of such Doctrine as breed anxiety and vexation of spirit, and can never satisfie nor quiet a conscience, must be understood here, we can more warrantably apply it to none, than to underlings of the Popish Clergie, and other propagaters of that Kingdom: Where these things are clear, 1. That their Doctrine is apt of it self to breed this vexation of spirit, such as the innumerablenesse of their ceremonies, holy dayes, Doctrine of merit of works, and uncertaintie of Grace and Salvation, perfection of holinesse, and fulfilling of the Law of God, with the great yoke of will-worship and superstition, which cannot but bring the zealots of these traditions under much bondage. 2. This is clear, that by their principles there is no quieting of a conscience once awakened: What can their penances, pilgrimages, satisfactions, indulgences, invocation of Saints and Images, and such like, do to the sprinkling of an heart from an evil Conscience? There needeth no more proof of this, than to read the Writings of some of their Casuists, and to consider the many donations given for soul-masses, after death, because the Conscience could never be quieted here. 3. We will find also both these made good in experience; Histories are full of instances of the heartlesse and comfortlesse life, and anxious death of many members of that Body, which God hath blessed to some, for constraining them to flee over these things to the alone grace of God in Christ Jesus. Yea, 4. doth not their doctrine pursue men till death, and after death to torment? their peremptory exacting of auricular confession of all sins, and that under the pain of damnation; their founding of the mans confidence upon the Popes pardon, the Priests absolution, his own penance and holinesse, or the vertue of some Sacrament (yea sometimes of some idolatrous invention, as the Masse, &c.) according to their principles, conferring grace by the working of the work (as they call it) and such like, cannot furnish the soul with solide confidence. Beside, the fear of Purgatory doth weaken that hope, or expectation of ease, which otherwise men might have from death: In this sense, though they seek death, yet it fleeth from them, and they obtain not their desire by it, and their vexation dieth not.

*Vers. 7.* Again, in the seventh Verse, he returneth to the

particular description of these locusts. 1. In their appearance or shape; *like horses*, that is, strong, and swift, and stout, as prepared unto battel. So *Gregory* before spoke of Priests, calling them *Sacerdotum exercitus* to usher in Antichrist. They are compared to *horses prepared unto battel*, because of their courage and expeditnesse in undertaking and prosecuting their designs, and because of the successe which followed them, who, as a conquering Army do prevail over the world, which is not armed against them. For which causes, these locusts, (*Joel 2.*) are compared to horses and Armies. 2. They are said to be *crowned with Crowns like gold*; to set forth their outward grandour and seeming stateliness and authority, which is not so indeed, though it appeared to be so; and therefore said not to be gold, but *like gold*. In a word, they are like Kings in pomp, and Armies in strength: This agreeth well to their Cardinals, Bishops and others of the Clergie of the Church of *Rome*. 3. *They have faces as the faces of men*, that is, a pretended affableness, and sociableness in their conversations: thereby to insinuate themselves by rational pretexs upon the affections of men, yet being indeed nothing lesse than they pretended.

4. (*vers. 8.*) They are said to have *womens hair*: which holdeth forth an effeminatenesse, and vain delicatenesse in their disposition and carriage, and a whorish way of decking themselves, and alluring others to their fornication; for which, this Kingdom (*Chap. 17.*) is called the *great whore*. 5. *Their teeth were as the teeth of Lions*, that is, cruel and ravenous, notwithstanding of the former appearances, devouring the souls of these that are subject to them, the bodies of these that oppose them, and the goods and estates of both, like these, *Mat. 23. 15*: who *devour widows houses, and that under pretext of long prayers*. The horses mentioned, *vers. 17.* have *Lions heads*; here they have only *lions teeth* with the faces of men, and hair of women. The reason of the difference is, although both agree in cruelty and destroying; yet the Popish Clergie (signified here) do more subtilly and covertly destroy souls. Therefore are they described by *Lions teeth* only, which are not so obvious to sight. The *Turks* again (of whom the sixth trumpet speaketh) do more manifestly appear what they are; therefore are described with *Lions heads*.

*Vers. 9.* He proceedeth to describe these locusts in their defensive and offensive arms; they are said to have *breast-plates*, as it were *breast-plates of iron*, and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battel. The first part sheweth their security from all danger, and the advantage they had in their war; there was no hurting of them more than there is of hurting horsemen well armed with armour of iron. The second part of the *vers.* sheweth the horrible noise and terrour wherewith they prosecute their designs when they find opposition; so that Armies with horsemen and Chariots, are not more horrible nor violent in their encounters than they are. In the application to the Clergie of the Church of *Rome*, both these may be made good by the many priviledges and immunities which they possesse, whereby they are exempted from dependance on all Monarchs but their own; by the dread of Excommunications and thunderings of Church-censure, while they keep the keyes of Heaven and Purgatory, they were not only free of fear or hurt from others, but also when they met with opposition from Emperours and Kings, did with such clamour and violence so persecute them, that no Enemy or Army hath been for a long time so terrible as they, making the world astonished with the stupendiousnesse of their pretended power. The effects of this have been often found, as Histories do witness.

The 10. *vers.* doth continue the description of these locusts in three particulars more. The first, is, *they had tails like unto scorpions*. Tails, (*Isa. 5. 19.*) do hold forth the flattering and saunting humour of false Teachers, who insinuate themselves by flatteries

flatteries and lies, as dogs (to whom they are compared) do with their tails. 2. It is said, *there were stings in their tails*; that is, not only their mouth and head were hurtful, but their tails: that which seemeth most pleasant to others, and is most delighted in, doth often prove most noisome and hurtful to them. Such fair words and pleasant speeches of corrupt men have ever a sting in them, tending to the seduction of the simple, *Rom. 16. 18.* 3. Their continuance is described, *their power was to hurt men five months*: this was formerly spoken of, *vers. 5.* and is again repeated here, either because it was mentioned formerly by way of limitation, that they should torment no longer than the time appointed; here it is to shew their continuance, which shall be till the appointed time come; or, it is doubled, to confirm the faith of Gods overruling providence in timing both the rise, continuance, and close of this dreadful plague. This *vers* also being particularly compared with *verse 19.* following, will also clear the plagues threatened by these two trumpets, to be of distinct and different natures.

Lastly, (*Vers. 11.*) Their government is described in three, 1. (contrary to that of locusts, *Prov. 30. 27.*) it is monarchick, *they have a King over them*, that is, although they be many and various and different among themselves, yet are they all subordinate to one supreme head, who exerceth absolute and independent Authority over all the rest, and who liveth in royal state and majesty in the world, having uncontroverted and illimited power within that Kingdom, and hath all others in subordination to him: it is impossible to indigitate any other by this than the Pope. 2. This Monarch is described by his Office, which is to be *the Angel of the bottomless-pit*: which holdeth forth two things, 1. That he is a servant to that Kingdom of darkness, one commissioned and sent in embassage from it, for its behave; and so is not to be understood of the devil himself, who is not properly sent, but sendeth from the pit. 2. It holdeth forth an eminent trusty and singular messenger of that Kingdom, therefore called (by way of eminency) *the Angel of the bottomless pit*, and therefore cannot be applied to ordinary false Teachers. In a word, he is the same *Star* that fell from Heaven, *vers. 1.* and got the key of the bottomless-pit, and the same *beast* (mentioned, *Chap. 13.*) to whom the Dragon doth especially give his power and commission as his great Deputy and Vicar in the backslidden Church; and therefore he is said (*2 Thess. 2.*) to come after the working of Satan, &c. 3. This King, is described from his name, which is set down both in Hebrew and Greek, *Abaddon*, and *Apollyon*, a name suitable to such a King and Kingdom. His name in both, signifieth a destroyer, or to destroy; partly, because actively he destroyeth; and partly, because he is to be destroyed. It is set down both in Hebrew and Greek; Because, 1. he usurpeth over all the Church, and proveth a destroyer both to *Jews* and *Greeks*. 2. Because in due time he is to be destroyed by both, as we will see on *Chap. 16.* and *19.* and also because the Lord would have him known to be so, both by *Jews* and *Greeks*, as *Pilate* caused write the title above Christ in divers languages. Our blessed Lord Jesus had two names, one, *Jesus*, in Hebrew, and *Christ* in Greek; both which hold Him forth to be a Saviour. This King will be satisfied with no less honour and extent of government, yet is described by these titles to be of quite contrary nature. It is not to be thought, that this King should assume such an odious title, or that any such should be attributed to him by his followers, but that indeed he shall be such, as this title describeth, that is, a most horrible waster, and destroyer of the Church of Christ.

This, all alongst, is applicable to the papal Kingdom, whereof the Pope is head, unto which shortly we have hinted, the application of it, which standeth sure upon the proceeding grounds and suppositions. For further confirming whereof, we shall, 1. in few words resume some general properties of,

and considerations concerning, this plague here described. 2. We shall lay down a little view of the publick rise, progress, nature, &c. of the papal Kingdom: from which two, we shall leave the application, by way of conclusion, to be gathered.

1. The object of this plague, is, the visible Church, and hypocritical Professours in it, who are not appointed and marked for eternal life. It is the same Christian world, and light of Ordinances, which is darkened and destroyed by it, which was weakened by the former trumpets. 2. The nature of it, is Spiritual, corrupting the Ordinances of Spiritual life, and bringing with it destruction to immortal souls. 3. The extent of it, is universal, over the face of the whole visible Church, the actors in it are Church-men, once by their places having Power and Authority in the Church of Christ. In time it breaketh out in a Spiritual Kingdom and Hierarchy; and upon a pretended Ecclesiastick account, assuming great Power and Authority, it doth breed, and is supported by swarms of Church-officers: the time of its publick appearing to be a Kingdom in an established form, will be found to be about the year 600. for, it followeth immediately the fourth trumpet; which continued the story of that time, and doth immediately preceed the rise of the Mahometans, which from the 700. year forward is at an height, and growth, as the exposition of the following trumpet will clear. This plague carrieth alongst with it much corrupt Doctrine; yea, bringeth again Idolatry into the Christian Church, as we will see in the close of this Chapter, and especially such corrupt Doctrine as overturneth the comfortable and quiescent grounds of the Gospel; it bringeth also to the world great store of new created orders for promoting these Doctrines and supporting that Kingdom, who both by covered subtilty and violence carry on their designs, and many such other particulars.

Now for the second thing propounded, if we will take a view of the papal Kingdom, What will we miss? That it is a Kingdom under one absolute Monarch with most illimited power, having dominion over the Church, being begun and carried on by Church-men, having corrupted the Doctrine of the Gospel, and brought Idolatry again into the Church, are all evident. I shall instance but these three particulars, 1. The nature of the Doctrine and errors brought-in by them, which, though exceeding agreeable to nature, yet exceeding opposit to the way of Grace, and therefore cannot but necessarily and narrowly be destructive to the solide consolation of souls, and beget fearful horror in the hearts and consciences of poor sinners, so that sometimes the greatest promoters of them, have been forced to abandon these principles under challenges: and their greatest disputants are constrained to acknowledge this, we have one instance in *Bellarmino de justif. lib. 3. cap. 7.* who, after his long dispute of indulgences, merit of works, &c. seeketh to sum up all in three assertion. The first whereof, attributeth merit unto works; the second alloweth men to confide in their own merits; yet as distrusting this foundation so largely contended for, he addeth a third proposition, *propter incertitudinem propriae justitiae & periculum inanis gloriae, tutissimum est fiduciam totam in sola Dei misericordia & benignitate reponere.* So that in end for uncertainty of mans proper righteousness and hazard of vain glory he accounteth it most safe to place our whole confidence in the mercy and goodness of God allanerly, and giveth this reason, if man hath no merit (saith he) he should not confide; if he hath (which yet is uncertain) it is no hurt or loss to flee only to Gods mercy. In which one assertion we may see, 1. The uncomfortableness of that Doctrine of merit that can never comfort solidly, because, at the best, it is uncertain. 2. We may see the hazard of it to foster pride and vain glory. 3. We may see the disquietness of it, by which sinners can never be secure, till they have fully renounced it. *Suarez* also doth homologate *Bellarmino* in this. And yet this Doctrine of merit is a prime



fundamental tenent of that Church, but hath often disappointed the defenders of it, when they had most need of comfort, and hath made them prize the Doctrine of Faith in Christ Jesus in their death, who often thought it absurd in their life: as particularly is written of *Charles* the fifth, after his laying by of publick things in the world and his retiring of himself to a Monasterie.

The second instance, is in the abundance and variety of their Religious orders, as they are called, which take up a main part of the description of this Kingdom: there is at least thirty five orders reckoned, each whereof, for the most part, will comprehend many thousands, beside their Bishops and other members of their Hierarchie. The number of the Monasteries belonging to these orders, are reckoned by some to be 225044. as is observed by *Alstedius* in his *Chronologie*: all which have their original by the Popes Authority, hold their dependency on him alone, and are vigorous instruments, specially devoted to the upholding and promoting of his designs.

Lastly, A more particular considering of its rise and publick appearance; which was about the same time, to wit, *Anno* 600. and its growth and manner of proceeding afterward will make out this, which was shortly thus,

After the three hundred year, when the Church possessed peace, pride soon infected her Officers, whereby there was ambitious desires after preheminance amongst these who should have been most free of that vice: *Rome* had many advantages for this end, and her Bishops improved them well, as hath been hinted in the exposition of the former trumpets; yet did never one of them usurp a settled superiority, or the title of *universal Bishop* or headship over the Church, till *Boniface* the third assumed it, about the year 606. Which was upon this occasion: after the seat of the Empire was translated from *Rome* to *Constantinople* by *Constantine*, that Bishop was privileged with all the privileges which *Rome* enjoyed, by her being formerly the seat of the Emperours court, even as that city was named *New Rome*, and made fellow in all privileges unto *Old Rome*: from this, many contentions followed, as is before hinted. While the Emperours court constantly continued there, the Bishops of *Constantinople* would not be content with equality, but assumed a superiority, and a title suitable to it, of *universal Bishop*. This, *John B.* of *Constantinople* did a little before the year 600. while *Mauritius* possessed the Empire, who did countenance him, it is like out of respect to the place, where his court resided. This usurpation was generally ill taken, and written against, especially by *Gregorie* Bishop of *Rome*, who did preface the revealing of Antichrist not to be far off, when men durst be so impudent to take that stile, which no Apostle ever usurped. Upon some occasion, the Emperours Army mutinying, did choose one *Phocas* (a base, vile wretch) Emperour, who having killed all *Mauritius* children before him, did afterward kill himself. Unto this *Phocas* did *Gregorie* of *Rome* make addressees, by Commissioners and Epistles, grossly flattering him, and abusing that place of *Daniel* 4. of Gods changing and transferring of Empires, as he had done that for the good of His Church, in removing a tyrant and setting up such a Religious Prince as *Phocas* was, as may be seen in his Epistles, *Lib. II. Epist.* 36, 44, and 43. By this means, *Phocas* came to favour the Bishops of *Rome*, and what out of envie towards *Mauritius* name, and what to ingratiate himself in the west by the Bishop of *Romes* means. Some few years after (while *Boniface*, who was at first *Gregorie's* Commissioner to *Phocas*, possessed the Sea) he passed an Edict, willing and declaring *Rome* to be acknowledged for the supream Sea, and the Bishop thereof for supream and Universal Bishop from that time forth. This decree *Boniface* the third, within short time caused ratifie and pronounce in a *Lateran* Council of 62. or 72. Bishops; and although it wanted not much contradiction then, and was

never fully acknowledged by all the East Churches, yet from that time did this great *Romane* Hierarchie receive its publick rise, and that mysterie which long had been working, was obfuscated and brought forth by such a midwife, as this infamous *Phocas*, *Anno* 606. as is said. At this time and after (as *Platina in vita Bonifacii tertii* saith) this Pope and others did put in their decrees, *Sic volumus & jubemus*; and saith, that the reason of preferring *Rome*, was, because the Emperour was still stiled *Romanorum Imperator*, wheresoever he resided.

Immediately after this, the light of the Word wonderfully decayed, traditions were obtruded, all publick worship was to be performed in *Latine*, the Scriptures were kept up from laick people (as they called them) *Letanies*, *Lurgies*, and *Masses* were brought in stead of the Word and preaching. And in effect, all reformatiions consisted in building Churches and Monasteries, and enriching them with great dotations; plurality of Mediators and worshipping of Saints and Angels were brought in (especially this was in *Vitellianus* his time, about the year 666.) Heathenish superstitions and ceremonies were brought again into the Church, the Temple called *Pantheon* (formerly dedicated to all the heathen gods) was now opened and dedicated to all Saints (this was in *Phocas* and *Innocentius* their time; Images were set up in the Church, and appointed to be worshipped: which occasioned great confusion in the Church, and although it was long resisted by the Emperours of the East, and by several Councils both in the East and West, yet was it afterward established by the second Council of *Nice*. This second Council of *Nice* was held, *Anno* 781. or 788. This worshipping of Images was mightily opposed by *Leo Isaurus*, *Constant. Compron.* and other Emperours of the East, who for that were Excommunicated by the Popes. At last *Irene*, a superstitious cruel woman, obtaining the Government after her Husbands death, the foresaid Council of *Nice* did conclude this Image-worship. It sat first down at *Constantinople*, but the people being enraged at this their designe, they were forced to remove it to *Nice*. It is marked, *Cent. Magd.* out of old Writers, that these Emperours urged the removing of Images, that that scandal might not lye before the *Saracens*, that *Christians* worshipped Idols; this Council of *Nice* was also withstood by *Charles the great* and *Ludovicus Pius*.

At this time also the Pope grew exceedingly to an height, not only of censuring Bishops and disposing of Bishopricks, but also deposing Kings and disposing of their Kingdoms at his pleasure, supremely and sovereignly to decide all questions whatsoever, and that without all possibility of erring. In a word, in every thing so absolute, as he might lead millions of souls to hell, and none might say to him, what dost thou? and all this with wonderful violence and terrour to any who should in the least contrary the same: which things are not only practised by the Head of this Antichristian Kingdom, but also are owned and maintained by these his formentioned Armies to be due to him (as from many particular instances, and their general principles might be made out) all which being put together (especially by the intelligent who are acquainted with their practices and Writings) it may be confidently concluded (which was asserted in the introduction to this Chapter) that the Popish Kingdom, is the very kingdom, the Pope the very King and the Angel of the bottomlesse pit, the Popish Clergie the very Locusts and Armies, and their Doctrine the very noisome smoke of the pit, which are here somewhat darkly, but exceeding fully and appositly described.

We shall say no more for use of all, But, 1. That we would blesse God, who hath so clearly discovered to us this abomination that maketh desolate. And 2. We would blesse Him further, that He hath freed us from this tyranny under which a great part of the Christian world doth lye, and by which

our own Predecessors were sometimes kept in bondage. 3. It would provoke us to improve the light and liberty of Truth, which he hath conceded to us, and to welcome the soul-comforting doctrines of the free grace of the Gospel. O what great odds is there betwixt the dispensations of the Gospel which we enjoy, and that which our Fathers lived under ! and therefore how much more is required of us ? and how much greater will the condemnation of these be, who shall ungratfully perish under this Light ? Lastly, let it stir us up with holy indignation against this contagion of Popery : ought we to think this a light and indifferent matter, which the Lord hath threatened as so

great a wo to the visible Church, and which he doth so significantly deliniate in the hellish nature and hurtful effects of it ? and let us commiserate the deplorable condition of many thousands of poor souls, captivated under this tyranny, and stung with the poison of these scorpions, who yet cry not when they are bound. And let us cry mightily to God to break this Covenant with death, and to bring this agreement with hell to an end, that the oppressed captives may be let go free, & the temple may be opened in heaven, & that he may take to him his great power, and reigne, that the Kingdoms of the earth may become the Kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Christ : even so. Amen.

*Concerning the comfortless grounds that Popery layeth down for the comforting of poor afflicted Consciences.*

**I**F we might take a view of such grounds as Popery layeth down for the quieting of an exercised Conscience, what a labyrinth would it be found ? For, 1. They deny all not imputation of sin or imputation of Righteousness, and place remission of sins only in the infusing of a gracious quality in the soul, which they call *gratia gratum faciens*, so that if the sin be mortal, this is lost (although the person were formerly just) and must again be recovered. If it be venial, he must satisfy for it. 2. To this kind of remission, they require *attrition* and *contrition*. The first is a legal sorrow for fear of wrath, the second is an intense sorrow for the sin committed ; the first proceedeth from servile fear, this from filial : both these they lay down as necessary for attaining of the former remission, or infusion of Grace. 3. To this contrition they give a fourfold influence in the attaining thereof, 1. Dispositively, or a disposing influence, as the material cause (as they call it) of this grace, that is, by this contrition as it is a virtue, the soul is disposed for receiving of that grace ; or, that that grace may be wrought in the soul, out of that contrition, as the pre-existent matter thereof. 2. It concurrerth instrumentally, as it is a part of the Sacrament of Penance, by which, the Priests absolution doth *ex opere operato*, beget such grace in the heart of one that is contrite. These two are laid down by *Thom. Supplement. quest. 5. Art. 1. corp.* 3. It concurrerth by way of satisfaction for the sin committed, and so this inward contrition in the sensitive part, is mans recompensing for his fault inwardly, as he doth outwardly inflict punishment on the body, *ad recompensandam offensam que in Deum committitur*, as *Aquinas* speaketh, *Quest. 1. Art. 2.* 4. It concurrerth meritoriously as an act of virtue, even as other works do for procuring meritoriously something from God, *supp. Quest. 1. Art. 2.* even the first entrance into glory.

All which wayes will be unsatisfying to a conscience ; for neither of them looketh on Repentance as that which the Lord of his grace hath promised and knit pardon freely unto : therefore, that it may be meritorious, there ariseth a new dispute ; wherein this contention consisteth. 1. Some old Schoolmen say it must be *in summo gradu*, otherwise pardon is not to be expected. 2. Others, of whom *Scotus* is the head, say that it is such a sorrow as is only known to God, and so by it the conscience can have no quiet. 3. The later Jesuits, as *Bellar. de peniten. lib. 2. cap. 11.* and *Gregor. de Valent. tom. 4. disp. 7. Quest. 8. de contritione*, do reject both these as false and dangerous : and because that contrition in such a degree is most rare, therefore they have a twofold cure, lest there be no ground to quiet one at all. 1. *Bellarmino* distinguisheth contrition in that which is *intensive summa* and *appretiative summa*, and saith, that though the first be not, the second will be sufficient, providing the sinner be still pursuing after the first to the uttermost, so that if any thing be left undone which

might be done for attaining thereof, this ground will fail ; and the conscience can have no peace in this, because in it there is a new sin, and what shall satisfy for that ? This is also rare, and considering that a awakened conscience will not easily acquiesce in its own appreciative contrition ; as being equivalent for satisfaction, that being only such as desireth to be intensively in the highest degree, as they expound it. Therefore, 2. the weight is laid on the power of the keyes, and the Priests absolution in the Sacrament of Penance (which *Greg. de Valentia*, saith, is *communis Scholasticorum sententia*) that is, that though contrition of it self be not sufficient, yet by virtue of the foresaid absolution, one that is *attritus*, doth become *contritus*, and so have the forementioned remission of sins bestowed on him. Therefore they make Baptism simply necessary to the pardon of Original sin, and penance to actual, except when it is impossible ; and in this case the vow thereof doth supply. To this sacramental absolution they require particular confession of mortal sins, *de necessitate salutis*, to be made necessarily to the Priest, before he absolve them, which can be no little torture ; and so still this leaveth the soul to dispute the Priests Commission, and the nature of that Sacrament, which will not easily quiet it, and also leaveth it under *Aquinas* his unanswerable Argument, *suppl. Quest. 1. Art. 3.* Where (saith he) the principles are divers, the one can never pass unto, or become the other ; But the principles of attrition, to wit, servile fear, and of contrition, to wit, filial fear, are diverse. *Ergo, &c.* When this is done, there is still a sick (even by their principles) in the uncertainty of this, whether their contrition be true or not ; or whether that remission hath followed freely or not : for, this, they say, cannot be known, but by particular revelation) Therefore do they conclude, that to supply all, it is necessary to enjoyn satisfaction in work, by penances, pilgrimages, donations, or such like, whereby they make up equipolently the effects of their contrition, and make all sure : And if the person cannot satisfy himself, because his sins are great, here they have their indulgences, and the application of the satisfactions of others for quieting the mind, whereby the Pope, out of his Treasury, and plenitude of Authority, doth apply the satisfaction of some others, who did pay more than their own guilt did amount unto, as *Bellar. speaketh de indul. lib. 1. cap. 4.* The Conscience is recommended to this for quietness ; whence it is, that so much money is given for these Indulgences.

These wayes indeed oppress the persons, and empty the purses of their patients, but can produce no solide cure. This great difficulty followeth ever that way, when external bodily penances do not the turn, then so many years have they to endure in Purgatory notwithstanding of ordinary indulgences, and this, (as *Bellarmino* saith, *lib. 1. de indul.*



cap. 9. pag. 1174) may amount to twenty thousand years, which is the great courtſie allowed by this way unto a tortured conſcience.

The question is. what may become of that perſon at the day of Judgement when his years will not be expired? By the intenseneſs (ſaith he) of the degree that is to be made up in three or four hundred year. This is the path way of their caſual divinity: and after all, they leave the patient at an uncertainty, when they have beſtowed all on them, and indured that twenty thouſand years in Purgatory, if for all that they may be afterward relieved and brought through; ſo it is ſtill at a venture, and what peace can be here in this way, where neceſſarily theſe four are controvertible? 1. Whether theſe means, being applyed, can work the effect, when no ſuch way is holden forth in Scripture, and is but grounded in many ſteps on traditions and canons, and diſputable principles at

the beſt. 2. Whether a proportionableneſs can be between, its ſatisfactions or ſorrow, and the ſin committed, ſo as they may quiet the conſcience, as having appeaſed God by them, ſeing His juſtice is infinir, and the deſerving of ſin is great. 3. Whether its ſorrow can be without ſin in its ſelf, and ſo being defective cannot be ſatisfactory, but muſt need a ſatisfaction. 4. Whether its own act of ſorrow be ſincere or gracious, that is ſtill uncertain, and ſo cannot but mar peace ſtill as they acknowledge. And to cloſe, it muſt be a poor peace which is ſought for in Purgatory, by ſo many years continuance there, and yet not to be ſure of it when theſe ſhal end. There is nothing liker the anxiety mentioned here than this, which is but an hint of that which is followed in many inextricable diſputes concerning theſe three parts of Repentance, to wit, *contritio cordis*, *confeſſio oris*, and *ſatisfactio operis*, which would ſooner diſtract a wearied ſinner than give quietneſs unto him.

## LECTURE II.

Verſ. 12. *One wo is paſt; and behold there come two woes more hereafter.*

13. *And the ſixth angel ſounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before GOD,*

14. *Saying to the ſixth Angel which had the trumpet, Loofe the four Angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.*

15. *And the four Angels were loofed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a moneth, and a year, for to ſlay the third part of men.*

16. *And the number of the army of the horſemen were two hundred thouſand thouſand: and I heard the number of them.*

17. *And thus I ſaw the horſes in the viſion, and them that ſat on them, having breſt plates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimſtone, and the heads of the horſes were as the heads of lions, and out of their mouths iſſued fire, and ſmoke, and brimſtone.*

18. *By theſe three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the ſmoke, and by the brimſtone, which iſſued out of their mouths.*

19. *For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto ſerpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.*

20. *And the reſt of the men which were not killed by theſe plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they ſhould not worſhip devils, and idols of gold and ſilver, and braſs, and ſtone, and of wood: which neither can ſee, nor hear, nor walk:*

21. *Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their ſorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.*

**I**N the laſt trumpet were deſcribed the nature and ſucceſs of the Kingdom of Antichriſt, who was there called, the Angel of the bottomleſs pit, in oppoſition to Jeſus Chriſt who is called the Angel of the Covenant. The viſible Church was peſtered with corruptions, ſuperſtitions and idolatry by him, for which the Lord threatneth to plague them with a more ſenſible plague by this ſixth trumpet.

The 12. Verſ. *One wo is paſt*, &c. is ſet down to rid marches betwixt the two trumpets and to make the tranſition clear from the one to the other. It is not to be underſtood, as if the event of the fifth trumpet were fully to precede the ſixth, and no ways to contemporate with it (the contrary of this is clear from the cloſe of this Chapter, where the idolatry,

brought into the world by the fifth trumpet, continueth unrepented of during the ſixth; but this is to be underſtood, either as holding forth the priority of their beginning, the fifth precedeth the ſixth, as being the procuring cauſe of it; or, it relateth only to the former deſcription, and ſignifieth this much, the deſcription of the firſt wo is paſt; and now cometh the typical deſcription of the ſecond. Therefore what we prefaced in general concerning the order both of ſeals and trumpets, is to be applyed here.

The judgement prophesied of here, at the firſt reading is exceeding terrible, and ſo deſcribed as muſt be neceſſarily underſtood of ſome more than an ordinary wo. In this deſcription we have, 1. the riſe of this plague, in the ſupream and

subordinate over-rulers thereof, *ver. 13, 14.* 2. The actors and executioners thereof are generally hinted at, *v. 14.* 3. Their commission is expressed, *ver. 15.* 4. The executioners and their execution following thereupon are described, *ver. 16, 17, 18, 19.* 5. The procuring cause of this plague is implied, *ver. 20.* As also, 6. the end which the judgement aimed at in it self, with the success, (or rather unsuccessfulness) which it had, are set down, *v. 20, 21.*

For the more clear opening of the words, we would permit these generals, 1. The object of this plague, is generally the same with the former, to wit, the visible Church, now drawn to superstition and idolatry by Antichrist, are plagued by this: for, judgements are spoken of in this Book, not as they are indifferently upon the world, but as particularly they concern the Church. And one of these trumpets after another doth contain a further step of judgement upon the self same object; and the Church being the object of the former trumpets, so must she be of this, otherwise the pronouncing of this wo would have with it no further addition to her plagued condition, which is contrary to the scope.

2. The Church here, is to be considered as declined, and as being guilty of idolatry, and many other gross sins, as is clear by *ver. 20, 21.*

3. It is clear also, that this judgement is of a different nature from the former (as was hinted in the exposition of it) and doth particularly denounce temporal judgement upon the Church, already drunken with Spiritual plagues: this the particular description will demonstrate; yet it is such a Judgement in temporal things, as carrieth gross abominations and Spiritual venom, for poisoning souls, alongst with it; so their having of tails like unto Serpents, &c. doth import.

Lastly, It must also be such a plague as is executed by some great power in the world, who have mighty Armies in executing this in a warlike, violent and successful, though in a barbarous and cruel manner.

And therefore, in short, we conceive no other to be intended here, but the dominion of the *Turks*, who, by their mighty strength, great cruelty and poisonous Doctrine of *Mahomet* have proven exceeding destructive both to the bodies and souls of innumerable poor Christians: which we may clear a little more in the application, and as we go through the words.

*Ver. 13.* The first thing *John* mentioneth, is a voice, *I heard a voice from the four horns of the Golden altar, &c.* which setteth forth the voice of God, or of Jesus Christ, as supream over-ruler of this plague, with allusion to Gods giving answers in His Temple under the old Testament. This voice giveth orders to the sixth Angel, the subordinate overseer of this plague, to loose, &c. by which is holden forth Gods sovereignty over, and his making use of Angels in the ordering of, the most fearful plagues that come upon the Church.

Secondly, The actors are touched at in this order which the Angel getteth, *ver. 14.* Loose the four Angels, which are bound in the great river *Euphrates*. Where we have these particulars,

1. Their nature, they are *Angels*, not properly to be understood; for, the thing which followeth is Armies of horsemen: but they are here called *Angels*, to signify their being subervient to God in His design, and their being fitted with agility, promptitude, &c. for this work, which he was to employ them in (it being ordinary in all this prophesie to compare instruments good or bad to *Angels* and *Spirits*, as, *Chap. 9. vers. 11. Chap. 12. vers. 7. and 16. ver. 13, &c.*

2. They are called *four*, not precisely to determine a number; But either,

First to signify the spreading of this plague to all the corners of the earth, That as (*Chap. 7. 1.*) there were four Angels holding the four winds, that they should not blow; so there are

here as many instruments to hurt the Church, as were there to prevent it. Or,

Secondly it may be to point out a fourfold difference either in respect of government, place, nature or ceremonies, which should be amongst these who should be actors in this plague, which we will find agreeable to the *Turks* in this sense also.

Thirdly, These four Angels are said to be at the great river *Euphrates*. This river in *Syria* is famous in many respects, 1. Upon it the great city *Babylon* stood. 2. It was the march of *David* and *Solomons* Kingdom that was from the Sea to the river. 3. It was the great fatal bound of the Roman Empire, beyond which they could never extend their dominion. 4. Because of the footing that the *Turkish* dominion took first beside it: for the first *Turkish* government being by four *Souldans*, all of them for a considerable time had their residence near and about this river, to wit, in *Asia*, *Aleppo*, *Damascus*, and *Antioch*, which were the places whereby these governours were designed. We conceive this river to be here mentioned, to shew, that such should be instrumental in this plague, as were neither within the Church, nor the Roman Empire, but should have their residence besides this river *Euphrates*, as the *Turks* are observed to have had before their dominion spread.

Fourthly, They are said to be bound in that river, that is, restrained from breaking in upon the Empire, or the Church in it, for a long time, by Gods providence, so as if they had been indeed bound for many years, what from intestine divisions among themselves, what by *Tamerlands* invasion of them, and what by our Lords providing some instrument to defend his Church for a time: these *Turks* were restrained from invading and overrunning the Empire, although they vehemently gaped after it. They are said to be loosed from that place, when the impediments and restraints, formerly keeping them in, are removed, and they (as it were) hounded like dogs, formerly tied up, to destroy the west part of the Christian world, which accordingly came to pass very speedily, when the *Turks* (having prevailed over the *Saracens*) did with them combine in one dominion under the *Ottomanean* family; which was about 1000. year and some more, from which time their power grew till a great part of Europe was overrun by them.

Thirdly, We have their commission, *ver. 15.* which sheweth the end wherefore they were loosed. 1. Their work, is to slay. 2. The number, is a third part of men. 3. The time or continuance of their execution, is, for an hour and a day, &c. To slay, is to be here understood properly to take away mens bodily lives: and therefore the expressions in this trumpet differ from what is in the former. The event also here marked, (the third part was killed, *vers. 18.*) doth confirm it. Again by the third part of men is not to be understood any number definitely, nor any indefinit number of the world absolutely considered; but a third part, or, a considerable number of the men living on this side the river *Euphrates*, from which formerly these executioners were restrained; now, being loosed, they are commissioned especially in respect of them; to wit, the ancient *Roman* Empire, now become *Antichristian*. 3. The time, or continuance, is set down in four several words, an hour, a day, a month, and a year. We conceive it not safe to apply it to a day, or an hour of any definite time: (which we would rather reverence than follow in the practice of others.) But we understand here a definite time bounded and limited of God for the prevailing of this plague, as there was set down a time to the locusts under the former trumpet. We conceive the words are multiplied, hour, day, and month, and year, to set out, 1. Gods particular determining and bounding of that plague in its continuance, to a year, month, day and hour, according to the phrase, *Nun. 9. 22.* whether it was two dayes, or a month, or a year, &c. which is there used



o shew the absolute dependance the *Israelites* had upon God in their marchings and sojournings, whether for time long or short: so shall it be here, the time for which they are prepared, is particularly appointed. 2. They are said to be prepared for such a time, differently expressed, to shew, that in diverse respects their continuance should be both for a short time, as of an hour or day; and also of a long time, as of a month and year. 3. To shew their alacrity to use the opportunity and liberty given them carefully; so that after the removing of restraints, they should not miss one hour or day in executing their commission, and should prosecute it vigorously, till the year or longest period of their continuance should be finished. Thus may they be said to be prepared, &c.

Fourthly, we come to the executioners themselves, and the execution which followed. They are described more particularly, 1. From their number and nature, *vers. 16.* The army, is, of *horsemen*; and the number, is, *Two hundred thousand thousand*. That which is added, *and I heard the number of them*, is to shew, that *John* invented not this number, but that he had it plainly revealed to him. They are called *horsemen*, partly, to shew the swiftness and celerity of their success; partly, to shew they were such a people as abounded with such warriors. The number we conceive (more than the time) is not definitely to be stuck to; but signifieth an exceeding great number. Both these agree well to the *Turks*, who have led the greatest Armies in Europe, especially of horsemen, and made the swiftest progress after their invasion, which hath been of a long time heard of, much more numerous than ever the *Christians* were able to oppose unto them.

The riders with their defensive armour, and the nature of the horses (and, it is like, their offensive arms) are described, *vers. 17.* They had *breast-plates of fire and of jacinth and brimstone*. Breast-plates use not to be made of such matter. We conceive the meaning is, they shall be terrible, dreadful and destructive, as *fire, brimstone, &c.* which, working terror on these whom they invade, shall occasion such security to themselves from the hurt of any, as if they were fully armed, and also richly, which we conceive to be understood by *jacinth*. Their offensive arms, or their offending power, are set out by two expressions. 1. *The heads of the horses were as the heads of lions*, that is, bold, fierce and destroying, and that professedly without any colour or pretext, such as the locusts had. 2. *Out of their mouths is said to issue fire and brimstone*: whereby it would seem, their wasting and cruel way of proceeding is set forth. Some also think it doth relate to the use of Cannon, Musket, and Pistol: For these two are certain. 1. That the use of these weapons was found out, much about this time. 2. There was never such abundance of them, and of such huge greatness, as was used by them in their European expeditions.

In the 18. Verse, The event of the execution is marked to be answerable to their Commission; *By these three was the third part of men killed*: This is to be understood properly, as *vers. 15.* It is marked, to shew, that there is no threatening or prediction of Gods, but is exactly fulfilled, and no Commission of His, but it is fully executed. In the application of this, the speedy, terrible and great overthrow of *Asia* the less, the coast of *Africk*, and a great part of *Europe*, being destroyed and overrun by the *Turks*, are sufficient evidences of the truth of this. Beside the cruel murder committed by the *Saracens* in *Italy, France, Spain*, where yet it pleased the Lord to keep them from settling.

*Verse 19.* Their manner of hurting is more particularly explained, 1. By a double mean whereby they hurt; *Their power is in their mouth and in their tails*. By *mouth* is understood their open violence against the body. The *tails* signifieth the abominableness of Doctrine spread by them, which is destructive to souls. 2. These *tails* are further described, (be-

cause their Doctrine was not spoken of before, though their violence had been described) they are said to be *like serpents* for poisonableness and subtilty; and *they have heads*, an unnatural-like thing that tails should have heads on them. This setteth out the gross abominableness and absurdity of that Doctrine. The locusts had tails, but they had not heads on them; these have heads, to shew, that it shall be more discernable in its grossness than the former. It is added, *and with them they do hurt*, that is, with their tails and heads. The first part of the Verse sheweth, that this Army hurteth both by cruelty to the body, and pestiferous Doctrine to the soul: therefore it is said, *Their power is in their mouth and their tails*. This last part sheweth the success that followed upon their Doctrine; there were many souls hurt and destroyed with this, as there were bodies with the former. This fully agreeth to the *Turks* also, who are not more terrible in their Armies to the bodies of men, than that pestiferous delusion of *Mahomet*, is of it self hurtful and destructive to souls, and actually hath destroyed many, a great part of the world in Gods righteous judgement being carried away with it.

We come now to the 20, and 21. verse, *And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not, &c.* The scope whereof, is, 1. To shew what sins procured so great a plague, and so fierce an enemy to be letten loose upon the Christian world: and indeed the consideration of these sins will vindicate the justice of God in inflicting all these evils. There is one sin mentioned in this verse, to wit, *idolatry*, several ways aggregated; and there are four more in the last verse added: and though God will suffer cruel abominations in *Pagans*, that never had the knowledge of His will; yet these who are guilty here, being by profession of his Church, there is the greater access in justice to take course with them. 2. It is set down to shew the end which the Lord drove by such strong Physick; it was at the health, and not the subversion of that part of the world; and so by the application of this mean, either to bring them to repentance, as the right fruit of all, or to discover their desperat impenitency. 3. It sheweth the fruitlessness of this mean, that notwithstanding it was sharp, yet did it not prevail with them; which is not to be understood, as if God failed of His intended purpose, but to shew how mad the Antichristian world was upon their idols, when such a judgement, having destroyed so many, did not yet effectuate the recovery of the rest.

By the rest of the men which were not killed, &c. Is to be understood, not these who remained all the world over, but within the Christian World, or Empire now declined to be Antichristian. The rest that remained, after the third part were killed of the same total, to wit, these on this side *Euphrates*; for the Lord observeth not what the rest of the world did, but what his Church by profession did, whom He correcteth when He forbearth all the world beside.

What we said in Preface to the trumpets in general, and to this, doth also confirm it. They are said *not to repent*, that is, that these idolatrous Christians, notwithstanding of these plagues, neither were inwardly brought to loath these sins, or to be humbled for them before God; nor outwardly to abstain from them in their practice, but rather grew worse, and doted more upon these superstitions, even after this plague, which fully came to pass also, Papists being never more drunk with their superstitions, and profane in their carriages, than since the *Turks* destroyed a great part of that Antichristian Kingdom.

The first sin mentioned, is, *Idolatry*, four ways aggregated, 1. *The works of their hands*: so called, because the Images and Statues used in that worship, are made with mens hands, and so cannot be a fit object of Worship. It is like hereby to relate to the second Command, where the making of all such,

such upon such an account, is forbidden. 2. It is called a *worshipping of devils*, not that it is so directly in the intention of the worshippers, but that it is so indeed, and accounted so by the Lord. Therefore it is usual in the Scripture to give it that name, *Leviticus 17. 7. 1 Cor. 10. 20.* Yea, not only that sort of Idolatry, which is against the first Command, is so called; but even that which acknowledging the true God, doth yet corrupt the rule of Worship prescribed by Him, by putting an Idolatrous manner in the room thereof. So, that Idolatry of *Jeroboam* the son of *Nebat* is stiled, *2 Chronicles 11. 15. He ordained him Priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made:* And yet the particular considering of that sin, will make it appear, that he did not directly intend the Worshipping of these Calves (and much less of devils) in the room of God. 3. This Idolatry is aggregated from the variety and multiplicity of it, in respect of the matter whereof these Idols were compounded, *gold, silver, brasse, stone and wood,* (of which mettals of all sorts, Images, Crucifixes, Relicks, &c. are abundant in the Popish Church) and yet whatever be the shape of the mettals, it is still, at the best, gold, silver, brasse, &c. and so no fit object of Worship. Lastly, It is aggregated from the lifelessness of these Idols, which being unable to hear, or move themselves, must be exceeding unfit to be invocated by others, as helpers of them; and so must imply exceeding great stupidity in these who fell into that sin. Upon which ground, the Scripture usually aggregeth that sin, *Psalms 115. verse 4, 5, &c. And 135. 15, 16.* both which places do pronounce the worshippers of them to be for stupidity like unto them.

There are four more particular sins charged upon them, *vers. 21.* and impendency under the same also. All which may be figuratively understood, according to the strain of this Book, or properly, as the words sound. The first sin is, *their murders*; figuratively understood, it holdeth forth the great blood-guiltiness of souls, which we formerly hinted at, in the exposition of the fifth trumpet. Properly, it holdeth forth the many Massacres, Persecutions and butcheries of Antichrist, whereby that Kingdom is guilty of the blood of many thousands of the saints, as from *Chap. 11. 7. and 13. 7. and 18. 24.* will appear. The second thing, is their *sorceries*, which figuratively holdeth forth bewitching and intoxicating Doctrine, and delusion therein, at a height: Literally taken, it holdeth forth a guiltiness of devilish and magical arts. According to the first sense, the whore is said to have a *Cup*, *Chap. 17. 4.* according to the last, Antichrist is said to come (*2 Thessalonians 2. 9.*) after the working of Satan, with signs and lying wonders. The thing signified by both, will be found in Popery; their Doctrine having bewitched and blinded so many, and Magick vented in lying signs and wonders, and other abominable pranks, hath been abounding, and frequent, not only amongst the inferiour Clergy, but even in the Popes themselves. And this under the pretext of working Miracles and Exorcisms, hath been in some cases avouched. The third sin, is, *fornication*: by which, we may understand their whorish Doctrine, which draweth souls away from God, in which respect that Kingdom is called the great whore; or, bodily filthiness (which we will often find in Scripture to go along with Idolatry, as from the Counsel of *Balaam* (*Numbers 32. 16.* and else where) may appear. This sin is not wanting in the Popish Church, especially in the Clergie, their pretended vows are snares to bring it on, as experience hath proven; Yea, *Bellarmin de Monachis, lib. 2. cap. 24.* saith, that it is more tollerable to commit fornication, than for one under a vow to Marry, although he have not the gift of continence, because, saith he, Marriage, *reddit eum inba-*

*bilem ad votum servandum*, which the other doth not. By their principles, they maintain Bordsels. It is said in *Rome* alone the permission of them have yielded yearly 40000. Crowns to the Pope. This sin is especially eminent among their Clergie, and often in their Head, the Pope himself: Yea, one Pope *Jean*, or *Juan*, according to others, is recorded to have brought forth a child in her Popedom. These things are not forged, but partly from experience have been found, and by their own Historiographers have been set down; partly, by some godly men in these times, and others more civil have been often complained on and regrated; Partly, are manifest from the Popes donations, and offices frequently bestowed upon their children, which continue to this day as avowed testimonies of their publick accession to this sin. The last, is, *their thefts*, that is, the breach of the eighth Command, taking and wronging the estates of men, and by indirect means, drawing them to themselves, without any warrantable right. This is especially applicable to the Romish Clergie, who by the pretext of donations, mortifications indulgences, annates, *Peters*-Patrimony, and *Peters*-pence, and such like means, have ingrossed to themselves the whole substance almost of Christendom. This sort of theft in the *Pharisees*, was long since condemned by our Lord as a breach of the Commandment of God, *Matthew 15. 5. and 23. 14. with 25.* Of all which sins, it is not only implied that the Antichristian world is guilty; but also that they, that is, the two parts not destroyed by the *Turks*, continue so to practise without repenting of the same.

The charging of the Popes with these foul faults, will not seem strange, if we consider what *Platina*, *Martinus*, *Onuphrius* their own Writers, and *Bellarmin* himself writeth concerning them from the 670. foreward: where abounded, 1. Irregularity in elections by bribes, magick arts, ambition, faction and violence, by poisoning and incarcerating their predecessors: so that *Platina*, in *vita Stephan. 6.* saith, *eo devenerat Ecclesiasticis, ut largitionibus sedem obtinerent*: The Church-men came to this condition, that they got the Papacy by bribes. And *Damas. 2. vi sedem occupavit inoleverat enim hic mos, ut cui seditione liceret Petri sedem invadere*; he took the Papacy by force, for this was the custom, that any feditious person might by violence take up *Peter's* seat. And, in the life of *Sylvester* the third, *Eo enim Pontificatus devenerat, ut qui plus largitione & ambitione, non dico sanctitate vite & doctrine, valeret, is tantummodo bonis oppressis & rejectis obtineret: quem morem utinam aliquando non retinissent nostra tempora; sed hoc parum est, &c.* The Papacy was come into this condition, that not he who was holiest, and most learned, but he who gave manliest bribes and was most ambitious, obtained it, and that only by bearing down and casting at good men: which custome I wish our times had not retained; but this is little of it, &c. 2. There is grossness in their persons for adultery, cruelty, devilry. *John* the 13. *omnibus probris ac turpitudinibus a pueritia contaminatus, venationibus, siquid temporis a libidinibus supererat, magis quam orationibus deditus. Hic sceleratissimus in adulterio comprehensus confossus fuit*; An infamous and vile man, even from his infancy, what spare time he had from his lust, was spent rather in Hunting than Prayer, at length he was stobbed in the very act of Adultery. *Sylvester 2. malis artibus sedem adeptus, Diabolum secutus, cui se totum tradiderat, ea lege Diaboli opem obtinuit, ut post mortem ejus totus esset*; *Sylvester 2.* having got the Papacy by unlawful ways, gave over himself to the devil, and got his help upon that condition that he should be his wholly after death. 3. Great cruelty in their poisoning, exhumating and beheading after death their predecessors, rescinding all their acts: So that in *Steph. 5. Haec consuetudo invaluit, &c.*



See more in *Chrysostom*. 1. *Bonifaci* 7. *Hildebrand* and many others. 4. Innumerable schisms, some of them reckon 26. decided ordinarily by violence, and some of them with two or three Popes continuing many years, to say nothing of *John* the 8. whom *Martin* and *Plat.* call a woman, who of child birth died in procession.

From what is said also we may gather, 1. That the Kingdom of Antichrist is not fully to be overturned by the *Turks*, but that there remaineth the greatest part undestroyed by that plague, upon which afterward the vials are poured forth, *Chap.* 16. God restraining and bounding that destruction for the Churches and Elects sake, which He had reserved; lurking amongst them.

2. We may see the tenaciousness of these men in not quitting their Idolatry, and repenting of their sins, which maketh way for the coming vials, under which also it is marked (*Chap.* 16. 9.) that they repented not, but went on in their blasphemies against God.

3. It appeareth, that the Idolatry and sins mentioned here, and the men who continue impenitently in them, are not to be understood of the idolatry and sins which the Pagan world is guilty of (whom God by this judgement aimeth not to reclaim) but such sins as the backslidden Church of Antichrist is guilty of, that being the world, a third part whereof is destroyed, and two parts whereof, for a time, are spared, as is said, it being not the rest of men simply, but the rest of the men, which relate to the visible Church (the object of these plagues) as contradistinguished from the rest of the world. Beside, the idolatries, murders, &c. mentioned here, and the men who continue impenitent in them, are the same who are plagued by the last two and last plagues or vials of the wrath of God; for, it is one continued controversy upon the same account, but the men plagued for Idolatry, murder, fornication, &c. by the vials, are the men who have the mark of the beast, *Chap.* 16. 2. charged with the blood of Saints, *ibid.* vers. 6. Yea, the seat of the beast (untouched by this plague) *ibid.* vers. 10. found guilty also of Idolatry, sorcery and fornication, *Chap.* 13. 1, 2, 4, 5. and *Chap.* 17. 4, 5, 6, &c. Therefore they must be of one and the same Antichristian Church. For, seeing such men under such guilt, are found tenacious of the same impiety under the vials, although plagued by them, Whom can we esteem them to be but the men spoken of here under the same guilt, who being spared, and yet continuing therein, are of new brought unto a reckoning by the Lord? neither were it so wonderful to see Heathens continue in their idolatries after crosses, but it is wonderful to see Christians do so; more might have been expected from them.

4. Hence we may gather, that supposing the former trumpet, and *Chap.* 13. 17. to relate to the Romish Church (for which the exposition of these places may be considered) and finding it true in the event, that the Romish Church, for a great part thereof, is overrun by the *Turks*; yet the seat, and as it were a two part of that Kingdom to be spared, according to this prophesie, I say, we may gather, that the Idolatry, sorcery, murder, &c. mentioned here, is to be enquired for among them, and that it is their worship, service and practices which are here so denominated by the Lord.

From what is said, we suppose it not needful to adde many reasons why we have applied this plague to the *Turks* or *Mahometans*, the consideration of what hath been laid down touching the object, nature, properties and effects of this sad wo, being compared in the event with the rise, progress, success and nature of the Turkish Empire; it will be found so evidently to be fulfilled in them, as will leave no ground to question it. Only let it be observed, that we conjoin the *Saracens* and *Turks* together as one; for, they possess the same parts of the world, did actually continue in one Dominion, do

follow the same Religion, Laws and Customs, and do observe the same manner of proceeding in their Wars, with the same hatred of, and quarrel against Christians, &c. and seeing in the event what is prophesied here, is found exactly to be fulfilled in them, the considering of this prophesie, and the reading of their story, doth of itself make the application. And considering the great change and destruction that by *Mahomet's* means hath been made especially in the Christian world, it is not like it would be omitted in this prophesie; and there will be found no type so suitable, nor time so agreeable to it, as that of this trumpet.

This *Mahomet* lived a little before and about the 650. year (a little after *Bonifaci* the third had assumed the title of *Universal Bishop*) he was an *Arabian*, a subtle fellow, and no Christian, about the 630. With the help of one *Sergius* a *Nestorian* Monk, and *Joannes Antiochenus* an *Arian*, and some *Jews* he began to coin his blasphemous *Alcoran*, wherein he endeavoureth a mixture of Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity, but of the grossest kind, to wit, *Arianism* and *Nestorianism*. It were long to rehearse all his tenets. He called himself the great prophet, and blasphemously applied some Scriptures to that purpose; he alleageth that his writings (to wit, what he calleth his *Alfurca* and *Alcoran*) were given him from heaven, and are without error, and therefore joyneth the Old Testament, the Gospel and the *Alcoran* together; he denieth the necessity of signs and wonders, but that the refusers of the *Alcoran* are to be persecuted with the sword, and yet that no man is to be persecuted for his Religion. To the receivers of the *Alcoran* he promiseth many great things, and asserteth it to be confirmed by many victories from the Lord; he asserteth One only true God, and denieth the Trinity of Persons, and absurdly asserteth a twofold personality of the God-head; he is against all Idols and Images, and alleageth himself to be specially commissioned against Idol-worship: and it may be that God having purposed him indeed to scourge that sin, hath also wisely ordered that, partly to make him the more instrumental in pursuing that sin, partly the more to convince and shame Christians that should be addicted to it. These things and such like may be more fully gathered from the *Alcoran* itself, and these who write of it. This is certain, that his monstrous absurdities became taking to many, and he himself to have great temporal power, especially on this occasion. *Heraclius* the Emperor in his wars against the *Persians*, had a considerable Army of *Arabians* in his service, who being dimitted after the war with reproachful speeches from their Officers, in stead of pay, did fall to mutiny. Upon these this *Mahomet* so insinuated himself, that he was received to be their head (from this came the name of *Saracens*; for, these *Arabians* being indeed *Ishmaelites* and *Hagarens*, but accounting it a reproach to be descended of, the bond-woman *Hagar*, to hide that, they claimed title to *Sarah*, and so assumed her name) after this *Mahomet* and they having prevailed in *Arabia* and settled in *Mecha* for a time, he left it, and invading *Syria*, settled the head of their dominion in *Damascus*. From this forward they speedily prevailed and did overrun many Kingdoms under the name of *Saracens*, yet were restrained from having footing in *Europe*, till after the *Turks* victory over them, they became of one Religion, under one head, for the further strengthening of their union. Since that time their dominion hath mightily increased under the name of *Turks*, so that now they are not restrained in the east as formerly, but do possess almost all the *Grecian* Empire, and parts of the western Empire also; yet have been kept from overrunning *Italy*, it being like that these are not to be made use of by the Lord for that peice of service of darkening the Throne of the beast, which is reserved for another time.

If it should be objected here against this application, that these eastern parts of the Empire, over which the *Turks* hath prevailed,

prevailed, are such as have been least submissive to the Pope, and therefore this plague of the *Turks* may rather be looked on as a judgement on them for breaking unity with him, than as a plague upon him. *Ans.* This is indeed harped upon by some of the Papist, particularly by *Bellarmin* in his preface *ad libros de Pontifice*; But will be clear by considering, 1. That once these Churches were professedly for the generality of them under him, the whole Christian world being admirers and worshippers of the beast, *Chap. 13. 8.* and subject to the Pope, as they themselves used to boast. Now, there being so many Christians destroyed by the *Turks*, it must either infer a great destruction to be upon the Popish Kingdom, or it must be said, that a third part of the Christian world did not blong to him, which they will not willingly grant. 2. Suppose there was a withdrawing from his usurpation in part, yet the same Churches, being once infected with idolatry, error and superstition, by the Bishops of *Rome*, did still retain that leaven; till this judgement came upon them, and so in plaguing them for these evils, God gave warning to others lying in that same guilt. And that it pleased the Lord to begin with these eastern Churches rather than others, these reasons may be given, 1. Because he was not by these hands to overturn the beaſts throne, but was to reserve a two part of that Kingdom, for other wise ends afterward. Therefore this west part of the world; is not first begun at. 2. In these eastern Churches Antichrists Kingdom and his corruptions had been most freely testified against and opposed, which made their guiltiness of after yeelding to be the more inexcusable and ripe for judgement. 3. By scourging them first who seemed least accessorie to

the guilt, the Lord would evidence how displeasing any part of it is to Him, and the more to convince others who were deeper therein; and it is agreeable to this, that these plagued here, are only charged with such corruptions and sins of the Church of *Rome*, as these Churches were guilty of; and the two part now reserved, and after plagued by the vials, are beside these, charged with worshipping the beast and having his mark, *Chap. 16. 2.* as if these did go a further length in the acknowledging of the absoluteness of the Pope than this third part, who are at the first reckoned with, did in that particular, though in the same guilt in respect of other corruptions. But lastly, it is clear that by this Turkish dominion a great part of the Romish power is eclipsed, and many of all orders, who had their dependance upon the Pope alone, were destroyed, whereof the war, called the *holy war*, is an evidence, besides the overthrow of many Kingdoms, Armies and Towns, who did directly own the Pope, and did not want his Holiness encouragement and benediction, with many consecrated Crosses, Swords, Banners, and the like, as pledges thereof: yea, not long before the ruine of that eastern Empire, diverse of the Emperours thereof, came purposely to be crowned at *Rome*, as acknowledging their dignity of the Pope; and (*Anno 1274.*) *Michael* Emperour of *Constantinople*, promised to Pope *Gregorie* the tenth the obedience of all the Grecian Churches: upon which grounds it is evident, that we may warrantably say that the tyranny of the *Turks* hath been a great plague to the Romish Ecclesiastick Kingdom, and that these who were destroyed by them, were generally accessorie to the guilt of their corruptions.

### Concerning the Idolatry of the Church of Rome.

IT may be of great concernment (and possibly of more difficulty) to clear this, that the Church of *Rome* by their worshipping of Images, relicts, and such like, even though they intend the worshipping of the true God, are yet notwithstanding really guilty of idolatry: and though it be not pertinent for this place to insist in it by a long digression; yet, (considering of what concernment it is for the clearing of this prophesie, and for warranting the application thereof to the Church of *Rome*, both in this Chapter and in many Chapters following) we think it necessary to lay down some things which may bear this application.

For the making out of this charge of Idolatry and worshipping of devils upon the Church of *Rome*, we shall first lay down what is such in the Scripture account. 2. What the Church of *Rome* doth practise concerning their Images and worship given to them. 3. Make out, that these practices are condemned in the Scripture, as worshipping of Idols the work of mens hands, &c. It is not our purpose to enlarge the first two, in speaking either of all the Idolatry which the Scripture condemneth, or yet of all the practices of the Church of *Rome*, which come in under this guilt, but so much as relateth to Images especially.

For the first, The Scriptures reckon and condemn a twofold Idolatry in reference to Images. 1. When the Image it self is accounted God and worshipped as such. This Idolatry is properly against the first Command, and is generally condemned in the practice of the Heathen.

The second sort of Idolatry, is, when the Images themselves are not worshipped, as having any Godhead properly in themselves; but as they relate to, represent, and are made use of in the worship of Him who is accounted God, so that the motive moving to worship, is pretended respect to the God represented by them, which we will find both amongst Heathens and amongst the people of God, the one worshipping

the Images of their Idols, not as gods themselves, but as intending to worship their gods in these, and by these; yet are they commonly condemned in the Scripture, not only for worshipping their supposed gods, but for worshipping the Images whereby they did represent them; the other, to wit, the people of God, professing to worship the true God, and yet for doing it by Images, and to Images, are condemned for worshipping of Images themselves, as the after instances will clear.

This sort of idolatrous worship may be two ways tried, 1. When we worship him with such worship as Idolaters used to their Idols. Thus the representing of the true God by Images, making high places and groves to Him, are condemned, *Deut. 4. 15, 16, 25.* and *Deut. 12. vers. 31, 32.* and *2 Chron. 33. vers. 17.* where, sacrificing in the high places, though to the Lord their God, is marked as a relict of their Idolatry.

2. It may be tried by this, when religious worship alone due to God, is given to any thing which is not the true God, though it were to instruments and means appointed by Himself: such Idolatry is condemned in *Cornelius*, *Act. 10.* and in *John*, *Revel. 19.* and the peoples going a whoring after the braſen Serpent (much more when that worship is given to any thing which is not made use of in the worship of God by His appointment, as Images of Angels, Saints, or of the Lord Himself) Thus it had been Idolatry under the Old Testament, to have worshipped the Tables of Stone, Pot of Manna, *Moses* Rod, Paschal or Lamb, such things ordinarily or extraordinarily made use of by God. These properly come under the second Command, whereby we are discharged, not only to worship false gods, or Images as gods; but also are inhibited to worship the true god any way not prescribed by him, but especially by images.

If it be questioned what this Religious worship is, we take it up thus, 1. That worship which the Scripture only appropriateth to the true God, as praying and vowing to Him, swearing



by His Name, building Temples, Altars, &c. seeking the restoring of health and such like.

2. We call that Religious worship, which Idolaters use to give to their supposed gods, such as to kisse an Image, *Hos. 13.* 2. to sacrifice and burn incense to them, set lights before them, and appoint Priests for them, *Judg. 17.* and of this sort was that Idolatry (*Act. 14.*) of offering sacrifices to *Paul* and *Barnabas*; for, these things have ever been counted Religious by men, and given to Idols upon that account, neither ever hath it been or can it be given to Images upon another account.

3. When the worship is not civil, it must be accounted Religious, as may be gathered from the circumstances thereof, as if the act, end and other circumstances be Religious, the action or worship it self must be so also; as it is one thing to bow the knee in a salutation to a man, it is another thing to bow in prayer, and that before an Image, to do it occasionally, and in such place, and purposely, as a peice of Religion and worship; to bow the knee at a table or before an Image, is one thing, but to do it before an Image, set up for a Religious end at a table, upon which Christ is esteemed to be really present, is another.

That we may be distinct in the second, we shall. 1. consider what is the practice of Papists. 2. What is their Doctrine concerning this sort of worship, and that in so far as is uncontroverted by them.

1. We will find infinite numbers of Images framed for the worship of God, and of the persons of the Godhead, distinctly, of the Virgin *Mariæ*, the Crosse, Angels, Saints, &c. 2. We will find them in their practice giving great worship to all these, kneeling to them, discovering themselves before them, offering oblations, and putting up prayers to them, building Temples, and sanctifying of them by these, carrying them in processions, &c. 3. We will find a worship given to Angels and Saints in a high degree; as praying, dedicating of Temples, swearing by them, seeking their intercession: of such kind are to the virgin *Mariæ*, as followeth, *Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei genitrix, ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi. Dulcis amica Dei, rosa vernans, stella decora, tu memor esto mei dum mortis veniet hora. Ave, sanctissima mater Dei, regina Cæli, porta Paradisi, Domina mundi, libera me ab omni malo, ora pro peccato meo*, that is, O holy Mother of God, pray for us, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. Sweet friend of God, the pleasant Rose, and glorious Star, be mindful of me when the hour of death shall come. Hail, most holy Mother of God, the Queen of Heaven, the port of Paradise, the Lady of the world, deliver me from all evil, pray for my sin. And infinite numbers of this kind to be gathered from the *Roman Breviary*, that is called *Psalterium Marianum*; a compend whereof, is set down by *Chemnitius* in his *Examen* of the Council of *Trent*, part. 3. *de veneratione sanctorum & eorum invocatione*. So are also their prayers to other Saints, as to *Elizabeth*; *Eia, mater, nos agnosce, &c.* O Mother, acknowledge us, &c. To *Nicolas*; *Credo, sancte Nicolae, tuis me precibus esse salvandum, ideo te clamo, &c.* *Serva me supplicem famulum tuum, amice Dei Nicolae, de presentibus angustiis & tribulationibus: quia in te confidit anima mea, ut per te me salvet qui tibi elegit.* I believe, holy *Nicolas*, to be saved by thy prayers, therefore I cry upon thee, &c. O *Nicolas*, the friend of God, save me thy humble servant from my present straits and tribulations, because my soul trusteth in thee, that He who hath chosen thee to Himself may save me through thee. *Sancta Dorothea, cor mundum in me crea*; Holy *Dorothee*, creat in me a clean heart: and hundreds of that kind. Yea, it is that length, that the Jesuits do monethly (as *Lorius* in 1. *Act.* asserteth) cast lots what Saint to choose for their Patron, for the month ensuing. *Luther* pronounced this sort of Idolatry to be the cause of the *Turks* War against Christendom, as in *vita ipsius apud Melch. Adam.*

4. Beside what worship is given to Saints and their Images, there is also a worshipping of the material Crosse, Nails and other things made use of in our Lords suffering, and of the Images of that Crosse, of the Saints Reliques, and Cloaths of the Sacrament of the Altar or Masse, or the Host, as they call it; these they adore, to these (especially the Crosse) they direct their prayers, as, *O crux, ave, spes unica, hoc passionis tempore, Auge piis justitiam reisque dona veniam.* Hail O Crosse, my only hope, in this time of Christs suffering, encrease in the Godly righteousness, and grant pardon to sinners. This is brought in by *Aquinas*, 3. part. 4. art. quest. 25. as the ground whereby he pleadeth the highest degree of divine Worship to the Crosse; because that song is used in the Church, insisted on also by *Bonaventura*, lib. 3. in *sententias, ad distinct. 9.*

These practices (and innumerable more) are the practices not of a few particular persons, but are contained in the public Liturgies of their Churches, we shall now enquire in their Doctrine concerning these practices, wherein we will not find them so unanimous: our enquiry is especially concerning the worshipping of Images.

1. They do generally agree, that Images of all these sorts may be made, and being made, ought to be worshipped with more than civil Worship, and with respect to these represented by them. And though this be determined by the second Council of *Nice*, formerly mentioned, and again ratified in their late Council of *Trent*, as may be seen in the acts thereof; yet are they not one among themselves in defining the nature of this Worship. Their prime Schoolmen, *Aquinas*, part. 3. quest. 25. *Bonaventura*, lib. 3. dist. 9. and others their followers, give to the Image that same worship which they give to that which is represented by it, to wit, to the Images of God and to the Crosse, they give that which they call *latreia*; to the Image of the Virgin *Mary* *υπερδουλα*, a worship above what is given to other Saints; to the Images of Saints *δουλα* it self. Upon this ground (cited out of *Aristotle*) that honour done to the type, honoureth him that is typified. And they labour to vindicate themselves from Idolatry by this distinction, that these Images may be considered, either, 1. *respectu materie*, as they are of Gold, Silver, &c. Or, 2. *respectu forme & significationis*, as they signify and represent; the first way they honour them not, but the second, say they. *Ergo, &c.* In which distinction we conceive the Heathen themselves would acquiesce; for, no Gold or Silver was worshipped by them, but as in such a form, and as under such a signification.

Again, *Durand.* (who hath not many followers in this, and is marked to be a special opposer of *Thomas* his Doctrine) though he asserteth that worship is to be given to the Images; yet saith, that it is not properly given to them, but to what is represented by them, so as our adoring of the Image, is the adoring of Him brought to our memory by the Image, as if He were present. Thus he, *Lib. 3. distinct. 9. Quest. 2.*

3. The later Writers, who would seem more subtle, as *Beilar. Gregor. de Valent. &c.* look upon these former two opinions as extremes, the one giving too much, and the other too little to Images. Therefore *Gregor. de Valent.* in 3. disp. 6. quest. 11. punct. 6. doth condemn *Durand* for this as well, though not in the same degree, as he doth the Hereticks. Their judgement is (although even they differ, *Gregor. de Valent.* being nearer *Thomas* than the other, yet both account it proper worship) that the Images should be truly and properly worshipped with Religious worship (relatively, as they call it) that is, with respect to the thing represented. Thus in one act of worship, they worship both the Image and the thing signified; with a worship suitable, but not equal, and the same with that which is given.

given to what is signified; as for instance, in worshipping the image of God, they worship God represented by the Image with the highest degree of honour; they worship the Image also properly, but not with the same honour, because they worship God for Himself, His Image for Him, and not for it self. Again, the Image of the Virgine Mary, is worshipped with true worship, but inferiour to what is given to her self for the reason foresaid, and also inferiour to what is given to the Image of God, but beyond what worship is given to the Image of any other Saint, because she her self is inferiour to God, though superiour to other Saints. This manner of worship they illustrate by an example; as suppose a great Courtier to be made Commissioner and Ambassadour for his Prince, he is received and honoured with all Kingly reverence due to him, whose Person he sustains; In this, say they, that honour is principally given to the King, who is honoured in his Ambassadour, as if he himself were present, yet truly and properly the Ambassadour may be said to be so revered, and to have all that honour done to him, as he filleth that room by representing his King, and, as such, he is really and truly honoured also; even so, say they, is it here. The honour of the thing represented is principally aimed at, yet so as for that end the Image representing is really and truly honoured with that same worship which should be given to him that is represented, if he were present, only it is not for its self, and so in that respect inferiour. Neither do they esteem this to be Idolatry; because they esteem Idolatry to consist in this, the giving of Divine worship to the creature after that same manner, and upon the same account that it is given to God. And therefore, although they give the same Divine worship to the Image which they give to God in it self, yet seeing they give it not upon that account, as if the image were God, and for it self, but relatively, Therefore can it not be Idolatry, because they never conjoin these two together, (as *Gregor. de Valent. ibid. ut supra*, expresseth it, *ut & cultum divinum usurpent, & illum quæ ratione Deo exhiberi debeat, tribuant creature, hoc est, ipsis imaginibus secundum se* (and, as a little after, *sicut Deo*) and therefore, *illi ejusmodi adoratione nunquam committunt idololatriam*.

It is generally granted further by the forced Authors, that the making of Images to God, was simply prohibited under the Old Testament, and that there is nothing under the new Testament to establish this worship, but that it is grounded upon tradition, and the Churches determination confirmed by a famous tradition of the Lords sending His own portraiture to *Abagarnus*; and of *Luke's* painting the Lord and His Mother, which are amongst their unanswerable arguments for establishing this worship. Therefore when that horned argument is propounded, Either Images are warranted by the Word or not; If they be warranted by the Word, that warrant is to be produced: If not, then are they not to be valued. *Eccius*, answering to this in his *Enchiridion*, doth no way offer to instruct their warrant from the Word, but asserteth many things in practice to be warranted by tradition, such as is for this. If then we make out this, that such worshipping of Images, notwithstanding of such exceptions, be condemned in Scripture, as Idolatry, we have what we proposed, and if this can be gathered from the foresaid grounds laid down by their most cautelous Doctors, what might be collected from the principles of their superstitious Monks and practices of ignorant people, especially if they were considered as in the time of darknesse, before the light of Reformation made them alter many expressions? *Cassander*, speaking of their worshipping of Images, saith *Consult. de imag.* that these Images were more or lesse reverently worshipped as they were more or lesse gorgeously apparelled, and that these which should have drawn others from these superstitions, proved to be the Authors thereof themselves,

that (*quæstus causa*) they did nourish them among the people.

*Argument 1.* If the Heathens who believed an invisible God-head, be yet found guilty of this idolatry of worshipping stocks and stones, &c. because they worshipped Images of such matter, even though they professed the worshipping of the God represented by these, and did disclaim the acknowledging of these Images to be their gods, or of worshipping them as such, but with relation to the God represented by them: Then this worshipping of Images amongst the Papists must be so also, notwithstanding of their exceptions: But the former is true. Therefore the latter must be true also.

The connexion of the major cannot but hold; for, if they be found guilty not only of worshipping the Idols represented by their Images, but also the Images themselves, because they worshipped their gods as represented in and by these images, So must the Papists be accounted worshippers of Images upon that same account; for, *a quatenus ad omne, valet consequentia*.

It cannot be said, that the worshipping of Images among the Heathen is only condemned as Idolatry, because they made Images to represent false gods, or because they represented the true God by unsuitable Images, as of an Oxe that eateth grasse, *Psal. 106*. For, 1. Idolatry and making of Images at the beginning, was not with respect to false gods, but was a degenerating from, and corrupting of the worship of the true God, as may be gathered from *Rom. 1. 23*. where it is said of the *Gentiles*, that knowing God they worshipped Him not as God, but changed His glory, not the glory of an Idol, into the similitude, &c. and it is like, this corrupting of the worship, of the true God made way for the altering of the very object of their worship, as an effect of the Reprobate mind which followed. Something of this also may be gathered from *Acts 17*. in *Paul's* dispute at *Athens*. This exception then would not serve to convince these, whom yet the Scripture condemneth. 2. We answer, that the connexion will hold even in reference to these who represented false gods, suppose *Jupiter*, *Diana*, *Apollo*, and such, because they were not only charged with worshipping these Idols, *Jupiter*, *Apollo*, *Baal*, &c. which were not the work of mens hands, but they are also charged with worshipping the works of their own hands, and images of these Idols, whom they pretended to worship by these representations, and adorations before them; and therefore the *ratio à pari*, will hold in this, that if these exceptions did not liberate them from the charge of worshipping their Images the work of their hands, So neither will it be effectual to exempt the Papists, because the Argument runneth not to prove them to represent false gods by their Images, but that the worship done to the Image (though pretended to be done to another) is also counted a worshipping of the Images themselves before God.

The other exception is of that same nature: for, the Scripture condemneth not worshipping of God in Images, because they were Images of unreasonable creatures only, but simply, because they were Images: *Rom. 1*. they are charged, that they changed the Glory of the incorruptible God, to the Image of corruptible man; and *Augustine*, *de civitate Dei*, cleareth out of *Varron*, *lib. 7. chap. 5* that the *Gentiles* portraited their gods in mans picture chiefly, though they were invisible, because mans soul is likest to them, and mans body being the vessel of the soul, is therefore the fittest Image to represent them, yet can it not be said, but that cometh still to be Idolatry.

The weight then of this Argument will ly in the Assumption, to wit, that even these Heathens who are charged with



worshipping Images in Scripture the work of their hands, did yet solemnly disclaim their accounting these Images to be gods, but that they worshipped them for the honour of the God whom they represented. This appeareth, 1. by considering these places of Scripture, *Rom. 1. ver. 21. Acts 17.* where the Apostles dispute ruaneth to condemn that opinion, That the unknown God ignorantly worshipped by them, could be worshipped by mens hands, *ver. 25.* that is to say, by making of Images, or could be represented by silver or gold, or any other thing, *vers. 29.* And although their thoughts of God might be more gross, yet this is ever true, that they accounted not their images to be the God whom they worshipped, and so did not worship them for themselves (or *secundum se*) but relatively with respect to others also, *Acts 19. 35.* express difference is put betwixt *Diana* and her Images, and the silver shrines that were made to her, and *Jupiter* is asserted to be in heaven, and therefore was distinctly considered by them from the Images they made unto him.

2. It will appear from reason, 1. if we consider that they placed their gods in heaven. 2. That they had many Images of one God. 3. That they often changed their Images, but not their gods. 4. That many whom they worshipped by Images, were once such as had been living in the world, unto whose honour they erected such Images, but could never nor did never suppose them to be the persons themselves.

3. It will appear from the heathens own disputings and assertions whereby they shifted that absurdity of worshipping the works of their hands; yet is it by the Fathers, on this ground, born in upon them See *August. in Psal. 113. (nobis 115.)* where having asked the Question, why the Scripture insisteth so much to clear that the images of the Gentiles can neither speak nor hear, &c. which could not but be known to a child? the reason is; saith he, Because by erecting such Images people are ready to conceive some Godhead to be in them. Hence when they were prest with this absurdity of worshipping the work of their hands, they did deny it, saying, that they worshipped not the Image, but the *numen*, or God which dwelt in it, and was represented by it, and that after its dedication. If some of them were prest further, that that *numen* or god was but a devil, they would answer, *nec simulachrum nec demonium colo, sed per effigiem corporalem ejus rei signum intueor, quam colere debeo*; I neither worship an Idol nor a devil, but by a bodily Image I behold the sign of that thing which I should worship. If Christians prest yet further, that the things represented were but creatures, as *Tellus, Neptun, Vulcan, Lucifer.* &c. or some Star, or this or that creature which was a body, yet saith he, they durst answer, *non se ipsa corpora colere, sed que illis regendis president numina*; that they worshipped not the creatures, but the Gods that ruled in them. In consideration whereof, he citeth that place, *Rom. 1.* of changing the truth of God into a lie, and serving the creature more than the Creator, as if by the first part, the Apostle did condemn Images of God, and by the second their interpretations of the worship given to them, because it is there counted a serving of the creature whatever their pretext was; for (saith he) who praying or worshipping, beholding an image, is not so affected as if he thought to be heard by it, and hoping to have what he desireth performed by it? Therefore (saith he) men involved in such Superstitions, turn themselves to pray to that image which they call the *Sun*, or *Neptune*, &c. as if they could affect them with their sighings, and give that same respect to them as to the thing signified by them, and pray to the Image before they pray to the thing itself. This (saith he) cometh, and some way is extorted by that visible image; as thinking that readiest to hear which is in shape likest to our selves, &c. where many other things are further to this purpose. Also in *Psal. 95. (nobis 97.)* where he bringeth in the Heathen

giving this answer, *Non illud colo sed adoro quod video, sed servo ei quem non video, quis est ille? Numen quoddam invisibile quod presidet illi simulachro*: where they distinguish betwixt *adoro* and *servo*, as Papists do between *ἀδωρεω* and *δουλέω*. If it were objected further to these heathens, that they worshipped devils, they would answer, They worshipped good Angels and *virtutes Dei*. It is replied in the same place, if they worshipped good Angels, they would reject their worship, as that Angel did to *John*, *Rev. 18. &c.* This way of shifting also may be found in *Lactantius, de origine erroris, lib. 2. Cap. 2. apud Chrysost. in Eph. 5. hom. 18.* From all which we may gather, that the heathens wanted not the same shifts for excusing their worshipping of Images, yet was it still charged upon them, that they worshipped Idols which neither law nor heard, &c. although still they denied it.

2. Thus we argue: If the people of Israel were accounted guilty of Idolatry and worshipping of devils, and the works of their hands, because of their worshipping Images, which they professedly erected to the true GOD, and even when they pretended the abhorring of false gods, and the adhering unto the true GOD, Then must the same guilt be justly charged upon the Papists, who worship Images, as is said; But the former is true. *Ergo, &c.* The connexion of the major dependeth on this, that the inhibition of idolatry and manner of worshipping God under the New Testament, is as strict and spiritual as it was under the Old. And therefore these who say that such making of Images of the Godhead and worshipping them was unlawful, must shew some repeal of that Law, before that can be granted. Beside, these Images being pleaded-for as Books for the rude and ignorant, it is unreasonable to say, that there is more use of such Books under the light of the Gospel, than during the Law which stood in types.

The weight of this also will ly then upon the assumption, to wit, that the people of Israel were charged with Idolatry in their worshipping of Images, even then when they pretended the worshipping of the true God by them. For clearing this, we shall consider these four Instances, 1. *Exod. 32.* 2. That of *Micah*, *Judg. 17.* 3. That Idolatry of *Jeroboam* which the Tribes of Israel continued long in. 4. That worshipping in the high places, condemned in the Tribe of *Judah*, 2 *Chronicles chap. 33. vers. 17.* In all which places, we suppose these to be clear. 1. That these worshippers intended not the worshipping of false gods, or of the images which they had made, but to worship the true GOD by these. And, 2. That yet they are still condemned as Idolaters, and that sin of *Jeroboams* is expressly called worshipping of devils, 2 *Chron. Chap. 11. ver. 15.* For the first instance, *Exod. chap. 32.* it is clear, 1. That they were not utterly forgetful of the true God, though practically that might be charged upon them; especially considering *Aarons* uncontroverted going alongst with them. 2. That that Image is called *JEHOVAH*, which brought them out of *Egypt*; which being a deliverance past, before these images had a being, must certainly be understood to be the representation of that God which brought them out of the Land of *Egypt*. 3. It can hardly be thought they should have esteemed these to be gods themselves, and so soon to have passed from them: 4. The service is service to the Lord, *ver. 5. To morrow is a feast* (not to the *Calf*) but to *JEHOVAH*. The worship performed, (*ver. 6.*) is not that which they used to give to idols, but to the Lord himself; the peoples end in requiring it, that they might have something to supply the want of *Moses* presence by some visible sign, and to have these to go up before them to *Canaan* whether the Lord called them and not back again to *Egypt*, doth make it appear, that their sin charged on them (*ver. 8.*) of turning out of the way, looketh to point out their failing to have been in their manner of worshipping the true God by an unwarrantable mean,

mean, especially if we compare this with *Acts* 7. 40, 41, 42. where this Idolatry is made the cause of Gods giving them up to worship the host of heaven. Now, by *Stephens* arguing, the worshipping the host of heaven must be idolatry of a grosser nature, than that committed by the Israelites, *Exod.* 32. and yet if their Idolatry was professed worshipping of the calves as gods, it will be found more gross than to worship the host of Heaven, at least there can be no such sensible gradation of heightening that Spiritual plague of worshipping the host of heaven beyond the other, which is *Stephens* scope; therefore it is thus to be understood, that because they corrupted the worship of the true God, contrary to his command, therefore God gave them up to the worshipping of these that are not gods, such as the host of heaven; which way of justice, was formerly observed in reference to the gentiles from *Rom.* 1. &c. So that the construction put upon their deed, (*Acts* 7. 41.) is the Lords estimation of it and not their own profession, and that the Israelites intended the worship of the true God in these calves, *Bellarmino* thinketh it not improbable, *de imag. lib.* 2. cap. 13.

The second instance is in *Micahs* practice, *Jud.* 17. where it is clear, that they counted not that idol to be God, but intended the worship of the true God by it: for (*ver.* 3.) the mother saith she had dedicated that money to the Lord, to make a graven and molten Image, intending expressly to honour the Lord in bestowing so much on that Image for him: For she 1. dedicateth the money to him, and then bestoweth it (as it were) for his use upon that Image. 2. It appeareth by *Micahs* great zeal to have a *Levit* to be his priest, and his joy when he obtained it, and his promising himself a blessing from the Lord upon that account; which certainly supponeth, that he intended good service to *JEHOVAH* in the doing of that, *ver.* 13. And lastly, we find that Priest enquiring counsel for the *Danites*; not from the Image, but from the Lord: whereby it appeareth, that they intended not the setting up of new gods, but the honouring of the Lord and confirming of themselves by visible signs of his presence.

The third Instance, is, that of *Jeroboam*, *1 Kings* 12. *2 Chron.* 11. in his infamous sin of setting up calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, whereby he made *Israel* to sin: that this is most gross Idolatry and worshipping of devils, the Scripture frequently holdeth forth. Yet, 2. that it was not *Jeroboams* design to withdraw the people from the true God himself, to the worshipping of these calves as God, but allannerly by corrupting the manner of his worship, to set up these visible signs of his presence in place of these appointed by himself at *Jerusalem*, will also appear, if we consider, 1. *Jeroboams* motive, inducing him to this sin: It was not for fear the people should worship the true God, or to prevent that; but it was for fear of the peoples going to *Jerusalem*, and to prevent that: hence his pretext is not to put these calves in the room of the God worshipped at *Jerusalem*, but to equal *Dan* and *Bethel* with these visible signs to *Jerusalem*, according to his saying, *It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem*, as if he would say, ye may worship God nearer home in these places designed. Neither is it likely, that he could have so expected to have effectuated his interprise by proposing a change in the object of their worship. 2. It will appear from this, that that Idolatry of *Jeroboam* is not only distinguished from the true worship of God continued for a time in *Judah*; but also from the idolatry of heathens abroad, and Idolatrous Kings succeeding to him, such as that of *Ahab*, *1 King.* 16. 30, &c. (who yet it seemeth wanted not all profession of worshipping the true God) *Jeroboams* Idolatry is counted light in respect of *Ahab*, and no other reason can be given, but because *Ahab* and these *Sidonians*, whom he followed, erred in setting up strange gods; and *Jeroboam* his error did consist in setting up strange worship to the true God; and when *Jehu*

is commended for destroying the Idolatry of *Ahab* (*2 Kings* Chap. 9. and 10.) it cannot be thought, that he changed only the worshipping of *Baal* into the worshipping of *Jeroboams* calf, without respect to the true God. For, 1. what less abomination were it to worship the image of a calf, than the image of *Baal*. 2. That could not consist with *Jehus* fair professions of zeal for the Lord, if he had not thought the worshipping of these calves (upon the former politick consideration of *Jeroboam*) consistent with worshipping of the true God, *2 King.* chap. 10. *ver.* 31. *Jehus* challenge is, that he took no heed to walk in the Law of the Lord with all his heart; for, he departed not from the sins of *Jeroboam*: which words imply, that that *Jehu* had some profession of worshipping the true God, but was not sincere in the manner of it: which phrase is also sometimes spoken of sundry Kings of *Judah*. Beside (*2 King.* chap. 10. *ver.* 32.) *Jehu* separateth between the worshippers of *Baal* and of the true God: and who were these, but even such as continued in the sins of *Jeroboam*?

3. We will find, even in *Israel*, whiles that Idolatry continued in it a general acknowledgement of the true God (by the Kings and People of these times) and of his Prophets: all which were inconsistent with their worshipping of the calves as the true God: beside even after the captivity of these ten Tribes, we will find the new inhabitants plagued for their idolatrous worship, which made them enquire for the manner of the God of the Land; which mixture in the service of the true God with their Idols, continued even till Christ came. By all which, it appeareth that the People of *Israel* never so esteemed of their calves as to account them gods, or to place them in the room of the true God; but that they esteemed themselves to be worshipping him when they worshipped them, which was the thing intended to be proven.

The fourth instance is from, *2 Chron.* 33. 17. *Nevertheless, the people did still sacrifice in the high places, yet unto the Lord their God only.* That this sacrificing in the high places (where the Groves and Images ordinarily were) was to no idol, but to the Lord only, is expressly asserted in the text; and in this it is differenced from the peoples sacrificing formerly before *Manasses* repentance unto idols. Now, their fault is, that they continue that manner of worship formerly used to their Idols and apply it to God.

That this practice of theirs is a kind of Idolatry, will also thus appear, 1. It is excepted as a thing that was discommendable, *Nevertheless they sacrificed in the high places, &c.* and consequently it must belong to one of the commands, which can be to none so well as the second, and must therefore be a breach of it. 2. Their sacrificing now is in general a sin of that same kind with their sacrificing formerly; But their sacrificing formerly was Idolatry: only this is the difference; it was formerly Idolatry against the first command, but now it belongeth to the second as failing in the manner of worshipping the true God. If it be said there is no mention of Images here? We answer, It doth make the more to the scope to condemn worshipping of God by Images, seeing he noteth it as so great a sin, where no images are, that there was yet so much of *Manasses* Idolatry unremoved, while the people continued that custom. And, 2. the peoples sacrificing there, doth imply, 1. A worshipping of God in a way not warranted by him. 2. A worshipping of him as Heathens (and they themselves) used formerly to worship their Idols. 3. Their sacrificing in the high places doth suppose a greater sanctity and fitness in these places than in other places, and a greater acceptableness to their sacrifices in these places, besides that, it is derogatory to the place appointed by the Lord for that end. All which sins do come under the Idolatry forbidden in the second command, and do stand on these same grounds, upon which worshipping



of God by Images is built, and therefore doth infer a charge of Idolatry upon people, even while professing to worship the true God in that unwarrantable way.

3. We argue, if this worship formerly described be against the second command of the Moral Law, *Thou shalt not make to thy self any graven Image, &c.* It must then be idolatry: But the former is true. The connexion is undeniable: for whether we take these words as a distinct command by themselves (as necessarily they must be, condemning an idolatrous manner of worship, as is said) or, if we take them as a part of the first command (as *Papists* and *Lutherans* generally do): yet still they are a part of the Moral Law, and must be binding according to their native signification; and seeing by these ten commands, the Lord hath laid on ties of perpetual obligation upon Christians under the Gospel, as well as on his people of old, if it be found that the forbidding of making or worshipping of images cometh under this command, whether first or second, It must also be still obligatory, and will not be gotten easily shifted out of the roll of the commands. For the *minor*, to wit, that this command condemneth as Idolatry all representing of the true God, or worshipping of him by Images, even when the Images are not worshipped for themselves, but for him, It may be thus made out, 1. If by this command the Idolatry of *Jeroboam*, and that sacrificing in the high places, (*2 Chron. 33. 17, &c.*) be condemned, then such worship (as hath been said) must be condemned by it also. That these practices were of this nature and are condemned, hath been formerly made out. That they are condemned by this command, appeareth. for, they must either be condemned by it, or by the first, they are not condemned by the first, which requireth the only true object of worship to be worshipped (for, they did not disclaim that) therefore it must be by the second.

More particularly the scope of this command, is to condemn all will worship, and worshipping of God otherways than he hath prescribed, as Idolatry; and worshipping of Him by Images is grounded upon no Scriptural warrant, but their own tradition, as is said. 2. This command forbiddeth all serving of the true God after the manner which the Heathens used in serving their idols: So *Deut. 12.* comparing *ver. 2, 3,* with the *4. ye shall not do so unto the Lord your God, &c.* Again, *ver. 30. Take heed to thy self that thou be not snared by enquiring how did these nations serve their gods? ver. 31. Thou shalt not do so to the Lord thy God.* It is not, thou shalt not do so to these idols, but not so in that manner to the true GOD, as they did to their Idols: But *ver. 32. What thing soever I command you, observe to do it, thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.* Yet more particularly the command doth instance two things, 1. That no image should be made; not simply condemning all painting, &c. but all Images of God, or, for worship. *Deut. 4. 12.* It is observed, that the people heard a voice, but saw no image, lest thereby they had taken occasion to represent him: which fault the Lord upbraideth, *Isai. 40. To whom will ye liken me that I should be like him?* And though Christ Jesus, the second person, hath now assumed our nature, yet it cannot be thought that the Image of a man can represent that person who is God and man in two distinct natures: and this command being moral, and binding now, as we said, it must be still as impossible, and unwarrantable to represent God as ever. Even the *Tridentine Catechise*, (*Seck. 19, in 1. Precept.*) affirmeth this

to be a breach of this command, and saith, that *Israel* sinned so in representing God by an Oxe, *Exod. 32.* with *Psal. 106.* The second thing condemned in this command, is the worshipping of Images made of whatever shape, or kind, and with such expressions, *Thou shalt not bow down thy self to them nor serve them*, and backed with such reasons, *For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, &c.* as purposely intending the overthrowing of all distinctions in this matter. In a word, if multiplying of Images in Gods service be not contrary to this command, we can conceive no other meaning to it, nor imagine any other use of it; which were absurd to attribute to the only wise God, as having needlessly put so many words in such a short sum; and yet by denying this meaning of it, this will follow, And therefore the razing it out of the number, and oftentimes from the society of the rest of the commands (as the *Papists* usually do by omitting this in their Catechises which necessarily followeth on their exposition) must infer one of two, either the uselessness of this command, as is said, or its direct striking against such worship, which may be the reason why they so willingly are content to bury it. If therefore this command be a peculiar and perpetual command of God, binding us Christians to serve him according to the rule of his Word, and particularly inhibiting the making or worshipping of images for his service, Then it will follow, that the worship of the Romish church, as formerly described, must be idolatrous and against this command. And so they are justly to be charged with worshipping Gold and Silver, and the work of mens hands, which was the thing proposed to be enquired into.

From all which it may appear, 1. What the Popish worship is esteemed of before God; It is *devilry, idolatry, murder, theft and adultery, &c.* This is his construction of their services: and what a sad thing is it, that the most part of the Christian world with delight should own these abominations?

2. It appeareth that when once men darken the light of the Word, and come over that, there is no rod readily that doth convince or profit them; now they adhere to their former superstitions, notwithstanding of all these rods that the Lord had brought upon them. There is need to use light well; for, It is precious; and when once it is put out, men may forever continue in darkness. This is fulfilled in the particular instanced; for, though the Popish service is loathsome to a spiritual discernor, yet is the world so drunk and bewitched with it, that hardly by any mean the favourers thereof are brought to abandon it, which is the fulfilling of this prophesie, and therefore although it were never so clear, that their practice is idolatry, yet can it not be expected that they will acknowledge it, this being both a part of their sin and plague, as is usual in the most gross idolatry, *Isa. 44. 18, &c. Rom. 1.* Which ought to make men admire and tremble at the depth of the unsearchableness of Gods justice and scar them from communion in these sins that mar even the reason of these that fall in them, which is no less discernable and terrible in respect of these who are mad upon their idols in the way of Antichristian Idolatry, than in heathens, in respect of their blind doting upon their idols. And there is reason for this, that these who have received the light of the Gospel in love, should be given to strong delusion, *2 Thess. 2.* as these, who did not walk according to the light of nature, and did not like to retain God in their knowledge, were given over to a reprobate mind, *Rom. 1. 28.*

## LECTURE

## CHAP. X.

Verf. 1. **A**ND I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire.

2. And he had in his hand a little book open : and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth,

3. And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth : and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

4. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write : and I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

5. And the Angel which I saw stand upon the sea, and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven,

6. And swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven and the things that therein are, and the earth and the things that therein are, and the sea and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer.

7. But in the days of the voice of the seventh Angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

8. And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go, and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea, and upon the earth.

9. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up, and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.

10. And I took the little book out of the angels hand, and ate it up, and it was in my mouth sweet as honey : and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.

11. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesie again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.



He sixth Angel having sounded, whereby the second great wo is brought into the world, it might be expected that the sounding of the seventh should be immediately set down, but, as after the opening of the sixth seal (Chap. 6.) there is something necessarily premitted for the consolation and confirmation of the people of God, before the seventh seal be opened, Chap. 8. even so here, there are two material consolations laid down (Chap. 10. and 11.) before the seventh trumpet sound, for the comforting of the Elect in reference to the sad estate of the Church formerly prophesied of : for, the visible Church now being darkened, and drawn into defection by Antichrist under the fifth trumpet, and a third part thereof being destroyed by Mahomets followers under the sixth ; and withall con-

sidering, that the rest did not repent of, but did continue in, their former abominations, it might be the occasion of many sad fears and doubts concerning the Church of God, both before and during that time ; and what that defection and impenitency should turn unto. In reference to these fears, there is one consolation laid down in this Chapter. In sum this, That that darkness shall not continue, but, at the peremptory appointed time, Antichrist should be destroyed, and the purity of the Gospel again brought to light, which is divers ways not only asserted, but confirmed in this Chapter, for strengthening the faith of Gods people in the hope of an outgate. And, 2. Because that outgate cometh not till the seventh Angel sound ( which yet seemeth to be for a long time delayed, considering not only the interruption put in here before its sounding, which yet ought to be observed, seeing it soundeth not immediatly upon the back of the sixth, as the  
other



other did upon the back of each other) but the many sad effects also which are to be performed by the fifth and sixth trumpets, which do necessarily imply the continuance of a long time for the bringing of them about, and therefore the People of God might have a new doubt and fear concerning the state of the Church, during all that time that Antichrist and Mahomet were in their height, and the sounding of this trumpet delayed. In the 11. Chapter the Lord obviateth this, by describing a Church and Ministry to be reserved for Himself during that time, who (although few in number, and poor in their outward condition) should continue unpolluted by the corruptions, and undestroyed by the tyranny of these times, until their testimony should be finished, and the dayes of their prophesying ended: upon the back of which, the seventh Angel bloweth, *vers. 15.* by which the former promised outgate beginneth to be accomplished. This we conceive to be the native scope of these two Chapters 10, 11. And hence, (*Chap. 11. vers. 14.*) it is observed, that *the second wo is past*; thereby implying, that what hath been formerly spoken since the sounding of the fifth and sixth trumpets, is to be taken as contemporary with them, and belonging to one of them.

In setting down the first consolation (*Chap. 10.*) we have, First, the description of the publisher of these glad tidings, intermixed with some circumstances, set down in the first four Verses, which do not a little contribute to the consolation it self. Then, 2. The sum of the seventh Angels Commission is set down, and the event foretold, is certified by the publishers oath, *vers. 5, 6, 7.* 3. The effect of the seventh Angels sounding, to wit, the reviving again of a Ministry, and publick preaching of the Gospel, after that darkness is both expressed and confirmed by Johns eating of the little book, and the word added, that he *must prophesie again* (as it were, be revived) after such a sad interruption. This is *vers. 9, 10, 11.*

The publisher is four ways described, 1. He is called an *Angel*, and a *mighty Angel*, to difference Him from these that sounded the trumpets: we conceive it to be understood of no created Angel, but of Jesus Christ the Angel of the Covenant, as the description following will hold Him forth. 2. His clothing and appearing are set down in four particulars, 1. He is *clothed with a cloud*; often applied to God, and only to Him, in the *Psalms* and *Prophets*, whereby the unconceivable, and inexpressible Glory, and Sovereignty of God is pointed at. 2. He is said to *have a rainbow upon His head*; so is the Lords Throne described, *Chap. 4.* 3. and *Ezek. 1. 28.* which is marked here, not only to shew the Glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, but that as the Rainbow (*Gen. 9. 4.*) was a sign, and a Sacrament (as it were) of the Lords Covenant with Noah, of not destroying the earth again by water; so our blessed Lord Jesus, being often suspected to be forgetful of His Covenant, and being now to give warning of the deluge of wrath which was to come upon the Antichristian world, He doth thus appear, to evidence His mindfulness of His Covenant both in the overruling of the Churches affliction, and His enemies ruine. His face and His feet are described as formerly they were, *Chap. 1. 15.* whereby it appeareth to be one and the same Person.

The second Verse hath the third thing whereby He is described, *He had in his hand a little book open*, some way like Him that sat upon the Throne, *Chap. 5.* only with this difference, that there it was in the Fathers hand, here in Christs; there it is called simply *a book*, here *a little book*; that was sealed, this is open: what is meant by His appearing with the book in his hand, will appear from the end of the Chapter. It holdeth forth here our Lord Jesus Christ to be the sender of the Gospel through the earth, and the having of it, as it were, in His hand to send in a manifest and clear manner, even then when it is most obscured and darkened in the world; for, which cause, this book is open in His hand, when the Temple

and Ordinances were shut up among men, as we may gather from the last *vers.* of the 11. Chapter.

It is much debated what this little book is; whether it be the same, mentioned, *Chap. 5.* or, any distinct book, containing distinct prophecies from what was in that book, as if what followeth in this prophesie were revealed to John by his eating of this last book, as being contained in it. It is not necessary much to debate this, considering, that it is represented to John in vision, and for another scope than the present furnishing of John for compleating of this prophesie. It will therefore be more suitable to say, that this book is the same mentioned, *Chap. 5.* as now in the hand of the Mediator, and opened by Him, and now called *little*, because so much only may be accounted, as hath not been by the former prophecies discovered; or, we may take the type of the *open book* to signify the preserving of the Doctrine of the Gospel, as if it were written on record, and kept in the hand of the Mediator, and therefore can neither of it self be vitiate nor destroyed by Antichrist or Mahomet. This, the scope, and the commanding of John to eat it, seem to favour; but, that it should contain prophecies, different from what was contained in the former book, *Chap. 5.* so that the former prophecies belong to that book, and what followeth this Chapter, to this book, mentioned here, we cannot assent to, 1. Because all the trumpets belonged to the first book, as being comprehended under the seventh seal of that book, *Chap. 8.* but the seventh trumpet followeth in the close of the eleventh, and is further explicated to the end of the book: Therefore all these prophecies are contained in the first book, mentioned *Chap. 5.* 2. This Chapter and the next, unto the 15. *vers.* do belong to the second wo; and therefore must be supposed to be contained in the same book with the first part, *Chap. 9.* Again, 3. If that series laid down in the preface to the 6. *Chap.* hold, that the seventh seal comprehendeth the seven trumpets; and again, the seventh trumpet, the seven vials, Then the seven vials are comprehended under the seventh trumpet, and so both vials and trumpets under the seventh seal. Beside, if this following part of the prophesie were compared with the former, we see no reason why it should either be called *little* or *open*, more than the former; The reason why this book is open in the hand of Christ, we conceive to be, (beside what was above hinted) 1. To shew Christ Jesus His acquaintance with the mysteries of God; this book is open to Him, and therefore that we may trust Him in the revealing of the secrets of God. 2. To typifie the future spreading of the Gospel, and to confirm it upon this ground, that as Jesus Christ had prevailed to open the book of the secrets of God, when it was sealed, and none was found able to open it; so might it be expected from Him, that the Gospel should be again brought to light, notwithstanding that during the reign of Antichrist it seemed to men impossible.

4. The posture wherein this Angel was, is observed, He *setteth his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth*: by which is set out His Sovereignty over both, and so that He hath Authority and Power to make out what He now pronounceth. Or, this *setting his foot on the earth and upon the sea*, being compared with the first part of the 1. *vers.* *I saw a mighty Angel come down*, it may look to be a type of Christs coming to take possession of the earth again, who, during Antichrists reign, seemed, as it were, to be kept in Heaven; yet afterward He shall come down and establish His Government through the earth, and by His Power bring under the greatest and most raging enemies. This suiteth with that expression (*Chap. 11. 17.*) of His taking to Him His great Power, and reigning as if there had been an interruption of His Kingdom formerly; which place is the fulfilling of what is here prophesied of.

Before the Angels words be set down, several circumstances are marked for making this Proclamation the more observable, v. 3.

*He cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: which holdeth forth seriousness and Authority in Him who goeth about this work; and that he purposeth to have what He hath to say, taken notice of. The second circumstance, is an intervening effect before His words be marked; seven thunders uttered their voices.*

We may look upon what precedeth this, as preparatory, and take up what followeth in the Chapter in three distinct principal parts, yet all tending to one scope. The first is expressed by these seven thunders uttering their voices: wherein we have, 1. the voices of these thunders. 2. *John's* practice, he was about to write what they uttered, which supposeth that he understood it. 3. There is the inhibition whereby he is restrained from that. We may look upon this, 1. generally, as prognosticating sad judgements to come upon that unrepenting world; for, by *thunders*, such are often signified in this prophesie, as *Chap. 11. 19.* (thundering in it self being an evidence of Gods dreadfulnesse) and though this general may be gathered safely, yet it is like the Lord intended not (at least in this place) particularly to set them forth, which we are to reverence, and not to seek any new mysterie from these words, but what elsewhere may be gathered, till the event speak. Or, 2. seeing they had intelligible voices, and were of concernment to the Church, which made *John* aim to writ them, and so not like to have been for no purpose at first revealed (with reverence) they may be conceived to hold forth the same seven judgements, which are executed by the seven vials following. For, these seven thunders signifie future judgements, and most probably must hold out the third and last wo which is yet to come by the sounding of the seventh Angel; especially considering, that (*Chap. 11. 19.*) thunderings and earth-quakes are marked to follow upon that Angels sounding, and these seven vials are the same with the last wo. Beside, the number of the vials being seven, and the seven last plagues which followed these thunderings in the event, we conceive it not unsuitable to take these seven vials, as the fulfilling of what was more generally hinted at by the thunders: And seeing we seek no new mysterie out of the words, but rather do bound curiosity, and do content our selves with what is afterward revealed, we conceive there is no danger to say, it is either thus, or it is nothing, which we can or should search into.

*John* as he had formerly done he goeth about to write, but is inhibited by a voice from Heaven, saying, *Seal up these things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.* He intended presently to communicate these things to the Church; and, no question, sincerely, from which yet the Lord restraineth him. This faith, Ministers ought to live in great dependence upon the Lord, not only for obtaining, but also for venting of light when it is obtained. It will not be warrant for them enough to communicate any thing, because they know it and understand it, there will need also a warrant for this; and it is no little part of wisdom, not to preach simple what they know, but what they know to be edifying, pertinent, and profitable to be brought forth, and so as approved by Him. It is not simply necessary to expound this inhibition of sealing, as perpetual, but as temporary, till some other visions were inserted, or till he had that matter expressed in other types; in which sense we will find the like inhibition, *Dan. 12. 4.* as also, *Dan. 8. 26.* But in this we conceive it not material to insist, providing we keep off the groundlesse mysteries, which some dig from these thunders.

Now he cometh to shew what the Angel published, and the manner of his doing it, *vers. 5, 6, 7.* First, he prefaceth (as it were) with a solemn oath, which tends to make the people of God give credit to his message, who, it is like, at that time would be much oppressed with misbelief: the manner of proceeding to the oath, is solemn, with *hands lifted up to heaven;*

and by the true God, described by His Eternity, *him who liveth for ever*; and by His relation to all creatures, as being Creator of them: not only in general, to shew how solemn a thing an oath is, and how reverently we ought to assume the Name of God, especially in this piece of Worship; but also to difference the true God and the right way of wearing, from the Idolatrous oaths used under Antichrist. Beside, this posture and manner of swearing, do fully agree with that, recorded, *Dan. 12. 7.* After he hath made faith in the thing, his deposition (to call it so) is set down more generally, *vers. 6.* and more particularly explained, *vers. 7.* It is first expressed in few words that he doth swear, *that there should be time no longer.* What this short negative doth signifie, is positively expressed in opposition this, *vers. 7.* *But in the dayes of the voice of the seventh Angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.* Where we have these three, 1. *That time should be no longer,* is expounded by this, *the mystery of God shall be finished.* 2. This mystery is described to be that same which was declared to the former Prophets. 3. The time of finishing this mystery is set down to be the sounding of the seventh Angel: and so we must gather the interpretation of this mystery, and what this is, *that time should be no longer,* from the events following the seventh trumpet. The mystery of God, (the opening whereof will clear all) is three wayes taken in Scripture, 1. It is taken for the end of the world, *1 Cor. 15. 51.* This was also spoken of by the Prophets, *Isaiah, Daniel, &c.* This place so being understood, the meaning is, the end of the world shall be hastened, and time (properly taken) shall be continued no longer: But the resurrection of the dead, formerly declared to the Prophets, shall be accomplished, and the effects following upon the sounding of the seventh Angel shall bring it about. This is truth: for, though at the sounding of the seventh Angel immediately time endeth not; yet the seven vials being the last plagues, have no temporal judgement succeeding to them, and immediately upon the sounding of the seventh trumpet they begin, and go on to put an end to time. And it is not unusual among the Prophets to say, such an event is fulfilled, when the mean, having influence upon the fulfilling of it, is certainly and speedily driving it on. 2. By the mystery of God, is understood the spreading of the Gospel, and in-bringing of *Jews and Gentiles* after the dayes of Antichrist, as it is expressed by the Apostle, *Rom. 11. 25, &c.* which also was not unknown to the Prophets, as the Apostle proves in that same Chapter. Thus the finishing of the mystery of God, will signifie the removing of Antichristian darknesse, and the spreading of the light of the Gospel, that Christ Jesus may have a flourishing Kingdom again in the earth, as hath been prophesied of: and that *time shall be no longer,* that is, though this be for a time suspended, yet after the sounding of the seventh Angel, it shall no longer be delayed. The words being thus understood, are the same with Christs taking to Him His power and reigning, *Chap. 11. 17.* and the opening of the Temple in Heaven, *vers. 19.* 3. By finishing the mystery of God, may be understood Gods bringing down the Roman Antichrist, (as the building up of that Kingdom, is called the working of Satan and mystery of iniquity) thus the meaning is, although the mystery of iniquity now be at a height; yet, faith he, Gods design of bringing him down shall be accomplished, and this ruine shall be begun when the seventh Angel shall begin to sound. This exposition is necessarily implied in the former, the exalting of Christs Kingdom, having the overthrow of Antichrists carried along with it. This agreeth also well with the scope, which is to strengthen Gods People particularly against his tyranny. And, 3. If we look to the event of the seventh trumpet, (*Chap. 11. 17, 18.*) it is the same for which the Saints give praise that God hath destroyed them, who formerly destroyed



the earth. We conceive all these three expositions may well stand together; for, the hastning of the day of Judgement, supponeth the preceeding of the other two; and the finishing of these two, to wit, the setting up of Christs Kingdom, and bringing down of Antichrist, doth infer the hastning of the day of Judgement: which is also marked in the event, *Chap. 11. 18.* The understanding of them also jointly, doth serve to the same scope, to wit, the comforting of Gods People in the faith of an outgate from Antichrists tyranny. And, 4. We will find them all particularly observed in the song which is sung upon the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which is the fulfilling of the event prophesied here; and therefore we conceive all these three may be taken in, but most properly and directly the last two, especially the middle acception, as coming nearest to the immediate scope of the place: and therefore *time shall be no longer*, is not to be understood simply, but comparatively, in some respect, *i. e.* of such time of darknesse, ignorance and persecution as then it was, that time should be no longer when Antichrist should continue to prevail, and the Saints to suffer; Thus it may relate to the forty two moneths afterward set for his reign, which cometh to an end at the seventh Angel his sounding.

The third part of the consolation, or confirmation, followeth, from *vers. 8.* to the end. Wherein, 1. there is a type, and 2. the exposition of it, *verse ult.* The type consisteth in a twofold direction given to *John*, and his obedience to both, *verse 8, 9, 10.* though at first, it is like he knew not what was intended. The type serveth both to illustrate, and confirm what was formerly said, and alludeth to that, *Ezek. 2. ult.* and 3. 1, 2. where eating of the book signifieth Gods instructing the Prophet for the work of prophesying when He sent him out, and His confirming of him by that signe: The effect of his eating, is, *sweet in his mouth, and bitter in his belly*: to shew, that communication of light from God, is in it self pleasant to Ministers; but, in respect of the difficulties that they meet with in their exercising of it, or in respect of the sad messages they carry, it is in its digestion sad and bitter to them, however they must carry it; and *John* neither feareth at it before, nor complaineth of it after he had eaten it.

4. (*Verse 10.*) There is *Johns* obedience: though it was told him it would be bitter, yet he took it, and ate it up, and found as it was told him in the event or effect of his eating, whereby he might be the more confirmed in the truth of what was typified by it. What is meant by *Johns* eating of the book, is expressed to him in plain words, *vers. ult.* he went on still, not disputing, nor asking what it meant till He shew him who gave the command; *Thou must* (saith He) *prophesie again*: intimating by this speech, 1. That there had been prophesie. 2. That some intermission had intervened. 3. That it should be again revived. 4. That it should be spread again before Kings, Nations, Tongues, &c.

If it be questioned, whether *John* be to be looked on here as getting a new commission for himself only, or as being a type of Gods raising the former decayed pure Preaching of the Gospel, and furnishing, or commissioning of Ministers for that end after that darknesse should be past; for, we will see (*Chap. 11.*) Ministers may live, and prophesie in their successors, when they are gone? *Answer.* I conceive both to be meant, but the last principally; and *Johns* eating, and commission that he getteth to proceed himself in this prophesie, to be but a type to represent the other, and a sign to strengthen him and others in the faith of it; that as truly as God setteth him on work again to prophesie, and maketh him eat an open book which before was sealed, so will He do in reference to that He hath promised in the former part of the Chapter, in bringing the Gospel again to light after Antichristian darknesse. Reasons of this, are, 1. It is most agreeable to the scope of the Angels

appearing, and this little book open in his hand, which is, to comfort particularly in reference to the strait the Church was then in. *John* had no other use of eating the book; for, his commission was clear before to write what he saw and heard, and all his visions afterward are what he saw without respect to this book, as if he had not eaten it. Neither was there any such intermission of *Johns* prophesying, to say he *must again prophesie*, nor did he ever actually, first or last, prophesie before Kings, &c. But this being a main part of the prophesie, must certainly be of larger use as it is propheticall, than to stir *John* up to a particular duty. It must then be understood especially of the revealing of the Apostles Doctrine, which was to be for a long time almost buried, yet was it, even that same Doctrine, again by the Lord to be revealed, in which *John* was again to prophesie in his Doctrine, or when this Revelation, especially by events, should be made more plain; then it cometh again (as it were) to the world and spreadeth amongst Nations, Tongues and Kingdoms: and this agreeth also well with the event which followeth on the seventh trumpeter, *Chap. 11.* and is in its scope a confirmation of what was said by the Angel in the Verse before; first, expressing it in a word, and confirming it by oath in the first seven Verses of the Chapter. 2. expressing it in a type, and confirming it by sign in the rest; which is well consistent with the former, seeing the Angels appearing with this book in his hand, and what followeth, do aim at the same scope.

This which was represented to *John* in type, we see through Gods blessing in some measure fulfilled in our eyes, the Gospel is again revived, and the fulfilling and finishing of this mysterie (which beginneth in the enlargement of the Gospel, and shall go on in calling in of the *Jews*, and end in perfecting the Bride, when she shall be made ready for the Bridegroom) is already begun; which proveth us to be under the seventh trumpeter.

In this tenth Chapter we may observe from its scope in general, 1. Our Lord is tender of the consolation of His people, and alloweth them to have confident expectation of comfortable outgates from Him in their lowest difficulties; therefore is consolation laid down before hand in reference to this. 2. The Lords people are often suspicious of Him in their affliction, and although it be most groundlesse, yet is He thought to have forgotten His promise, *Psal. 77.* and scarce will His word at sometimes get credit by them; therefore doth He swear here to put that suspicion out of their hearts, which needlesly He would not do; for this cause hath He also sworn His Covenant, *Heb. 6.* here Grace someway contendeth with our suspicions; therefore the Lord so condescendeth to our weaknesse, as to give us for our security that which one mutable creature useth to rest in from another, as the yondmost of what can be attained. 3. Our Lord Jesus is a most stately and glorious Person, and it is not the least part of this consolation that He is so; therefore this glorious description is begun with, to shew, that there is such a connexion between Him and His people, that if He be glorious, they will be so, and He is glorious even then when the world seemeth most to slight Him. 4. The ignorance of the excellencie of Christ, doth much increase His peoples discouragements; therefore is this description laid down as the remedy thereof, shewing also that the right up-taking of Christ in His excellencie, and in respect of His Covenant administration whereby His faithfulness appeareth to His people, is a main foundation by which the daily comfort of His people is sustained: if this were thoroughly belied and improven, there would not be such room to confusion and profanity in evil times. *Objs.* Men ought reverently to speak and make mention of the Holy God: when this mighty Angel speaketh so of Him, *vers. 6.* what ought we to do? If we heard the holy Angels speak of Him, and to him, we might be both instructed in our duty, and ashamed of our practice in reference to this, which

is no little evidence of our Atheism. *Obs. 6.* Time certainly shall have an end : every purpose that the Lord hath concerning His Church shall be accomplished. This is here confirmed by this mighty Angels Oath, and this end will be shortly ; what therefore is bounded within time, is not much to be valued. *Obs. 7.* It is none of the least of the consolations that Gods

people have, that time speedily passeth away, and so, what ever is promised hasteth to be performed. This is the end why this is set down here : the men of time, who have but their portion in this life, and all their projects within time, will have a poor bargain when time shall be no more, and then the great consolation of the people of God is but beginning.

### Concerning Prophefying.

**T**here is much spoken of Prophefying in this Book, and of Prophets, *Chap. 11.* and *Jezabel* (*Chap. 2.*) is reproved for taking to her the name of a Prophefess ; and here the reviving of Prophefie is spoken of in this Chapter : It may be inquired then, how these places are to be understood ? And if Prophefying may be now expected in the Church ? or, if that gift hath now fully ceased ? or, in what respect ?

We may consider *Prophefie* or *Prophets* in a threefold consideration, 1. In respect of the matter that is brought forth : which is either, 1. some general truth not formerly revealed in the Word. Or, 2. some particular contrary to what is formerly revealed there either in Doctrine or Practice. Of this kind might be the Israelites their borrowing of Jewels, *Abraham* his taking his son to sacrifice him, and many such practices which cannot be condemned, yet do not agree with the precepts that are in the Word for directing of the people of God in their ordinary carriage. Or, 3. It is some particular neither formerly revealed, nor yet in it self contrary to the Word, but that which concerneth some particular event or personal duty allanerly.

2. We may consider it again as it holdeth forth an ordinary or extraordinary way how these things, or any thing else, come to be known although the matter be a truth formerly revealed in the Word, such as the matter revealed to these Prophets, *1 Cor. 14.* which was to be tryed by the Word.

3. It may be considered in respect of the proposing of what is revealed to others, to be a direction, or, to rule them in their practice, and that either by recording it as Scripture, as some of the Prophets of old did, or by taking on an office or authority, and by vertue of that to do it. Or otherwise, we may answer in these assertions.

*Affert. 1.* There is now no gift of Prophefie, either for the bringing forth of any truth not formerly delivered, nor any gift to warrant one in a particular simply condemned in the Word, as to take anothers goods, life, station, &c. so as to be warranted meerly by such a Revelation in things otherwise unlawful, as it is like propheticall men of old, in some of their practices were, which to us are no precedent for our warrant ; which appeareth, 1. Because now the Word is complete, furnished with truths, to make the man of God perfect for every good work, and that in respect of the last administration of the Covenant ; there is therefore no access to the adding of any new matter. 2. Because if any other Gospel, or duty contrary to this Word which we have received, be preached, we are not to receive it, but to account him accursed that carrieth it, under whatsoever pretext he do it, if he were an Angel ; and this leaveth no place for admitting, either of truths, or duties contrary to the Word, *Gal. 1.* 3. The commination added in the close of this Book (*Chap. 22.*) confirmeth this, there being the same reason against adding unto, or detracting from the Scriptures in general, or any part of them, as there is in reference to this Book ; all of them being of the same Authority, yet is it not without weight added to this as the close of all. 4. The gift of Prophefies, being now generally ceased (as afterwards will be clear) and the Lord having thought good more mediately and solidly (as it is called

a more sure word of prophefie, *2 Pet. 1. 19.*) to feed His Church, to wit, by His Word ; and He having given now much more Scripture under the Gospel than under the Law, to supply the want of immediately inspired Prophets ; and considering how rare the examples of Gods calling for duties seemingly contrary to Moral commands, are, and what absurdities would follow if now any such gift should be pretended unto in reference to such matter. We conceive it therefore safe & necessary to conclude, that there is now after Reformation no such gift of Prophefie, or Prophets to be expected or admitted, who may add any new truth to the Word, or command any new duty contrary to it, by arrogating to themselves, or imposing something as duty on others which the Moral grounds of the Word do not allow of ; and it is confirmed by this, that we are commanded to Try the Spirits ; and even the Revelations of extraordinary Prophets (*1 Cor. 14.*) were to be tryed and judged : which can be by no rule, but by the Word. It followeth therefore that no Revelation, containing any thing contrary to the Word, is to be admitted or received as from the Spirit of the Lord.

*Affert. 2.* Yet is it not altogether to be denied, but that the Lord may in particulars of the last kind sometimes reveal himself to some by foretelling events before they come, such as the famine that *Agabus* foretold of, or *Pauls* imprisonment were : of such the story of the Martyrs and Saints do sometime make mention ; and particularly, *Athanasius* is often advertised of hazards, as is recorded, and in their verity cannot be denied : and of this sort there were many at the reviving of the light of the Gospel, who by foretelling of particular events were famous, as *John Hufs* his foretelling within an hundredth years after him to follow the outbreking of Reformation ; such, it is like, was *Hieronymus Savonarola*, who was burnt by the Pope, not as was pretended, for foretelling of events, as they imputed to him, by unlawful means, but for faithful reprovng of his faults, as he is described by *Philip de Cumins* and other Authors : of such many were in this land, as Master *Wishart*, Master *Knox*, Master *Welch*, Master *Davidson*, &c. And this cannot be said altogether to be made void : for although God hath now closed the Canon of the Scripture, yet that He should be restrained in his freedom, from manifesting of Himself thus, there is no convincing ground to bear it out, especially when experience hath often proven the contrary in the most holy men. Yet, 1. This is not habitual or ordinary to any, but is singular at some few times and in some few cases. 2. Every perswasion of mind before the event come, and answerableness in it when it cometh, will not be sufficient to make it pass for a Propheticall foreknowledge, more than when in dreams it may often so fall out. 3. This will not denominate one to be a Prophet, although in some singular events, God maketh this use of him : Nor, 4. can such predictions warrant any to do a thing as a duty, which otherwise would not be warrantable unto them. 5. There is difference to be put betwixt the simple foretelling of an event, which may be of God, and a conclusion which may be drawn therefrom ; this may be of our selves, as we may see in the predictions of these (*Act. 21.*) who foretold *Pauls* imprisonment at *Jerusalem*, yet was not that to divert him from his going there, as many collected ; that therefore was not from God, as *Pauls* pressur in the spirit to go notwithstanding, doth clear ; every such prediction



prediction therefore cannot be made a rule of dutie, seeing the Lord may have other good ends of trial, advertisement and confirmation in it. And we will not find that any have made use of such particular revelations, as from them to presse a dutie upon others, that would not otherwise be warrantable, although when it concurreth with other grounds, it may have its weight for swaying in lawful things.

*Affert. 3.* Prophecie taken for an immediate revealing of Gospel Truths and mysteries, such as that, 1 Cor. 14. and what was frequent in the Apostolick times, is now ceased; and there is neither such a gift, nor such an office. 1. There is not such a gift; for, it is not common to all that are renewed, it was not so in the Apostles dayes, there were diversities of gifts, and this gift is distinguished from saving grace, 1 Cor. 12, and 14, &c. neither is that particular gift of prophecie continued; for, there is no other gift continued, as these of *healing, tongues, and interpretations*, whereby men may come in an immediate way to the exercise of these. And, 2. experience sheweth, that that hath ceased, and God calleth men to the use of ordinary means for the attaining of the knowledge of His will; and there being now no such gift that will abide trial, there is therefore no such office to be pleaded for, that followed upon that; yet even these Prophets in the matter prophesied by them, were to be tried by the Word and judged; and in the gift, if it were a revelation indeed, 1 Cor. 14. Now there being none such who can abide that proof, we are not (at least) without that to acknowledge such a gift, or such an office.

*Affert. 4.* Yet if we take prophecie for the understanding of Gods mind, and for attaining to be well acquainted with the mysteries of God, by a mediate way; yea, and that beyond the applied means, or to have a gift and capacity for discerning of these things with little pains and that beyond what some others can attain unto by any labour, we conceive that in this sense Prophecie and Prophets may be said to be continued in the Church; and such God raised up in the time of Reformation, men singularly gifted with a Prophetical Spirit in this sense, which may be the fulfilling of this prophesied of in this Chapter.

*Affert. 5.* No gift of Prophecie now can warrant one authoritatively to set down his light, although it be truth as Canonick Scripture, or as of equal authority from itself with the Writings of Moses, &c. and other Scriptures, That in the first Assertion was casten, though one by his gift may reason from, or genuinely open these Scriptures by writ, as by word.

*Affert. 6.* No gift can warrant one to take on him the office

of an authoritative Preacher, even though in some particulars Gods mind extraordinarily should be revealed to him; for, it is not the gift that giveth the authority of an office, but Gods authoritative mission; otherwise a woman (as Philip's daughters) might be an Officer in the Church, and have publick access to preach and teach, which yet the New Testament admitteth not, even when it speaketh of this gift of Prophecie, 1 Cor. 14. and ordereth the practice of extraordinary Prophets; there, this inhibition is inserted, and elsewhere; yea even in these primitive times there was a trial of the spirits and gifts by the Prophets, before any was to be accounted such: beside, one may have a particular event revealed to him, who yet may be more unacquainted with the mystery of the Gospel than others, who by Gods blessing have attained to knowledge in an ordinary way; and if it cannot warrant an office to such, neither will it do in this case: there is now therefore no Prophet by an immediate Call.

*Affert. 7.* Yet we say, that as God by gifts may furnish some in a more than ordinary way; so may He, and useth He to thrust them out in a mixed way to the exercise of these for the edification of His Church, and make the seal of His Call extraordinarily ratifie His sending of them, that is, as He may furnish men partly by means, and especially by His blessing extraordinarily accompanying them, so may He send them out partly in a mediate way by mens opening of the door, partly by His more than ordinary thrusting of them out, making up so what was defective in the mediate Call by some extraordinary concurrences of impulse and gifts within, of circumstances of providence without, and of efficacy upon, and acception of it amongst others, whereby it cometh to be ratified. This the Lord fulfilled at the entry of the Reformation, raising up men comparatively extraordinarily furnished and commissioned for His work, yet still Ministers of the same Gospel, and walking according to the common rule with others in their ministerial charge, This is not ordinarily to be imitated, but where the like cases, call, and circumstances concur; and thus the Lord in old stirred up men at times of Reformation to take on them the furtherance of His work, who yet were not properly extraordinary Prophets or Officers, or Levites, nor ordinarily called Magistrates, as *Nehemiah, Ezra*, and others, who did both differ from *Haggai, Zechariah*, and such who were properly Prophets, on the one hand; and from *Josuah, Zerubbabel*, and such who were ordinary and properly Priests and Magistrates on the other; which yet in ordinary and settled conditions was not done.

*Concerning a Minister his particular Message to a particular Auditory, and if it may be again and again insisted-on and repeated.*

**B**ESIDES what is already said, there are two things in the Chapter which we may consider a little further. And, 1. from *vers. 4.* we may see there is no lesse Spiritual wisdom and dependence on Christ called-for in the venting of light and in bringing forth of what we know, than there is diligence required in searching of Gods mind that we may know; and it is not warrant enough for Ministers to communicate that to the Church at all times which they know, because it is the Truth of God. For, *John* knew that these seven thunders were such, but there is a more special warrant to be looked unto: We mean not that there should be some extraordinary thing here: but as from *Johns* call, in general, we may gather the necessity of a call to the Ministrie; so from his being commanded to write this and not that which was also revealed to him, we gather proportionably, that Ministers ought to try what in such and such a particular case is called-for to be communicated unto peo-

ple as Gods message at such a time to them, seeing every thing which he knoweth cannot be delivered at once; something therefore is to be chosen, and that upon such consideration as may be sufficient for his peace who conscientiously aimeth to follow Gods mind: in reference to which, we may adventure to propose these generals, 1. That men would not look for any extraordinary impulse in swaying of them to the choice of Texts or Doctrines, it will be safest to walk by reasons that will abide the trial, especially where that which the impulse driveth at, doth not appear upon rational grounds to be so edifying indeed, where any extraordinary offer of a Text and solide reason from the conveniencie of that matter concur, in that case it is not to be neglected; yet now seeing God hath not left men to an immediate way of attaining to the knowledge of the Gospel preached, but doth require of them the use of mediate & ordinary means, so also are men both in reference to their calling in general

and to particular messages, to collect His mind more from solide sanctified reason than from a meer internal impulse, lest thereby God be tempted, and Satan get occasion to insinuate himself too much in our choice, or at least to confuse us by proposing one thing after another, that so he may indispose for all; reason therefore would fix the determination, and even sometimes against the apprehended inclination, and once being fixed, would not easily or rashly be altered, lest thereby one be brought to question one place after another, and so fall into confusion, and anxiously consume the time in choosing of a Text which might otherways be more profitably employed.

2. Although God be not tied to any immediate or extraordinary pointing out of such a particular subject or condition of souls, yet is He not to be slighted, but humbly, to be depended upon, and seriously to be prayed unto for guidance and signifying of His mind in that, either by some inward leading of the mind to that which may be profitable, or by inabbling of us singly to discern and conclude from rational grounds what may be called-for by Him, that so His pointing at some one thing beside another, either by inward stirring, or outward circumstances, be not despised, but at least brought to trial if it be found fit; and we are sure if it be of God, the more it be tried, it will be found to be the more suitable.

3. In this trial, not only the matter is to be considered as it is truth, but also if it be edifying and profitable as lying near the great end of the Gospel, to wit, the engaging of souls to Christ, and conforming of them to Him, Christ being the end of the Law, and the foundation which the wise Master-builder layeth and buildeth upon among a people, 1 Cor. 3. and all builders are to take heed not simply only how they build, but how they build thereupon, *ibid.* *vers.* 10. lest they build hay and stubble thereon instead of gold; and all truths, that considered in themselves, are more remote, are to be squared by, and lavelled so as may further this. 2. If it be pertinent to the present Hearers and their present case, either for convincing, comforting, or instructing, &c. as we would conceive Christ would do, if He were writing from Heaven to such a people as he did once, *Chap.* 2. and 3. and to the seven Churches.

3. In this choice, even the temper and disposition of the people is to be considered, and so what may most edifie these who are so qualified, in which a Minister is neither to seek to be pleasing unto them, nor yet needlessly to irritate, but so to lavel at edification as he may most probably gain the end on such; for, as in bodily diseases, Medicines are not to be given alike to all persons for the same diseases, but respect is to be had to several constitutions, and accordingly applications more strong or more gentle are to be prepared; so here, some are more sharply to be dealt with, and contrarily: order also is to be observed where several things are necessary what to begin at, and how to proceed and prepare them so as they may be received and admitted; for, as the most healthful Potion cannot profit the Patient except he receive it, and it be so prepared as he may not utterly nauseate and loath it; so is there often no lesse dexterity called-for in the mannaging and ordering of a fit matter, &c. and in the choosing of an apposit mids and gaining manner, that what is useful for reproof, conviction, &c. may without prejudice from the way of propounding it, be accepted and digested, than there is faithfulness necessary in aiming at that scope.

4. In all this, there is much need of singleness, that the conscience may have a testimony of its aiming allanerly at edification, when it is searching to discern what is mainly called-for; neither will it be unuseful to observe what Doctrines occur, to which of them a door is opened, making the enlargement thereof the more easie, which of them have the most pertinent usefulness flowing from them; This is a main rule to be observed in the making choice of Doctrines, and in choosing upon these and the like grounds the conscience may have quietness;

for although they be not sufficient to sway one simply to the choosing of any matter, yet where the question is betwixt things equally pertinent and profitable, at least where the difference is not so easily discernable, they may have weight comparatively to sway to one more than to another: and although, especially where there is occasion, Ministers ought deliberately to choose their purpose, and know it is truth even from the place they are to speak of before they go to publick, that they may in Faith assest that to be the meaning of the Spirit, and with the greater boldnesse go to speak when they are clear of of their warrant; yet we conceive, that Ministers would not peremptorily limit their message to what matter or expressions the Lord shall furnish them with in their private studie, so as to repel every motion that may be suggested to them in the time of delivery: in this indeed men had need to be sober, and to fear, lest in hunting after other Doctrines, or by their negligence or presumption needlessly they tempt God by slighting the ordinary means when they may use them, much lesse would they accept of every motion of every matter, as coming from God to them to be brought forth at such a time; for, if these motions be dangerous, and not alwayes safe in private, as was formerly hinted, much more have they need to be adverted to in publick before one forbear the following of some digested purpose to insist on some other thing but presently occurring, yet where some outward providence changeth the case from what it was in the speakers apprehension before his coming to publick, or where the matter suggested is pertinent both to the place of Scripture and pressing of the same purpose which the Preacher aimeth at, so as if it had offered in private, he would have embraced it before some things he had thought of, and the matter being such that he is not altogether unacquainted with, but hath clearenesse in the thing which is now presented before him; if also it hath with it some convincing proof and weighty expression of the thing which is in it self profitable; we conceive that that is not altogether to be slighted and neglected, but may warrantably and in faith be yeilded unto, and embraced, as if it had been formerly thought upon, especially when the Lord hath been sought in private and diligence hath been used; yet it hath there been a restraint as to the Lords furnishing of some apposit message till then there can no reason be given why the Lord may not suspend the answering of these prayers till the speaker come to publick and then do it: and except this were, Ministers should never go to publick how ever necessary their Call were, till first they had satisfaction about their particular message in private, which were too great a limiting of God, and unbecoming that dependence which His Ministers ought to have on Him, which daily experience doth prove not to be in vain; and seeing the message must come from the Lord, is it not alike as to the thing it self, whether He give it in private or in publick? neither can this be called a leaning to immediate and extraordinary inspirations, because by this, there is neither any new Doctrine approven, nor any new way of attaining the knowledge of the Lords mind commended, but only this, that Truths mediately revealed in the Word, and upon the matter known to the Preacher with the grounds and the reasons thereof, may be sometimes brought into the mind of the Preacher in publick, which he did not think of in private, yet when presented to him they are in themselves as clear to him to be the truth, and able to bide the trial of the Word, and also fit and apposit for his present purpose as much, and it may be, more than what he had thought of in private; and can he be denied freedom now to choose to insist on these which he would have accounted afavour to have had presented to him in his secret Chamber? Sometimes also the Lord will think meet, that the Minister prosecute some point in its application beyond what he purposed in his private thoughts, and will put an edge upon him and give him liberty in the delivery thereof beyond



beyond ordinary, and furnish him with expressions suitable for the following thereof, and shall he straiten his own liberty which all Ministers are to pray for, and shun the pressing of that which is profitable upon his Hearers, even when he is fitted for it, because that was not presented to him in private? It cannot give him peace to despise that motion, when the judgment is convinced of the soundness and edifyingness thereof: for, in such things as are most profitable to people, and which therefore the Spirit doth suggest, there is to the intelligent Minister an unquestionableness; and the question is not here, whether such a thing be truth or not; for we suppose that it is obvious, and if it be not so, there is then good ground to lay it by till in a due way it may be tried (for it is not like that at such a time the holy Ghost will propound matter, which is debarable, to be the subject of a Ministers present message for the edifying of people;) but the question is, whether the bringing forth of this truth now presented, the reproving of this sin, the pressing of this duty, &c. be pertinent and may not more usefully be brought forth at this time than suppressed? we conceive there can be no such difficulty here in this, but the decision thereof may be easie. Sometimes also a matter studied, may in the Lords wisdom be forgotten, and some other profitable matter offered in the room thereof, by which He sometimes necessitateth the insisting on this which may be by His blessing more useful than the other; It is recorded of *Augustine* by *Poss.* in his life, that being extraordinarily cutted short in his memory from his intended purpose, he was led abruptly and with vehemency to insist against the *Manichean* Error contrary to his purpose, and that palpably both to his own observation and to the observation of others, which made him thereafter at dinner express his confidence, that the Lord would evidence some design of His in that particular, which accordingly came to pass; for, a *Manichean*, beside *Augustines* knowledge, being a Hearer, within some few dayes openly disclaimed that Error, and acknowledged that digression by the Lords blessing to have been the mean of his conversion. And many such cases there are wherein the Lord may signifie His mind of a message to a Minister at the instant of speaking, which ought not to be despised by him.

5. There is much help in this debate, when a Minister, who hath ordinarily the same hearers and no extraordinary occasion intervening, doth settle on an ordinary, either in respect of purposes to be gathered from diverse Scriptures, or of one portion of Scripture continuedly together; in which case the general at first is to be chosen according to the former grounds, which also will warrand in the following thereof, although no such explicit debate be about every part; and this is neither unuseful to the Minister or People, because in Scripture, and particularly in the Epistles, the Doctrines that suit Persons and Churches, are wisely and compendiously often compacted together; and the following of the method of the holy Ghost, and the dependence that one thing hath upon another, doth both contribute much for the bringing forth of His mind in the Word, when it is followed in the order proposed by Him without diversion and interruption, and also maketh it more weighty to the hearers, and more native, and to be digested with the less prejudice, when they see such doctrines and purposes so linked together by the holy Ghost, and obvious without any immediate choice of the Minister himself, whereas often people are ready with more prejudice to look on particular Texts made choice of by the Minister, as having more of men in it than in the former way; and certainly the holy Ghosts putting of purposes together, sometimes in one method, sometimes in another, is not to be despised, although Christian prudence would choose what matter and method doth more suit the case of such a people than another, and accordingly to fix on the Scripture that is most agreeable to that. It seemeth also that among the *Jews*,

order in reading and expounding of the Law was observed, and we see it for the most part ordinarily followed by the Ancients in their Sermons; yet, in this way every Verse or every Doctrine is not to be equally insisted on or prosecuted in the Application, but these are to be chosen which make most for the edifying of the present hearers, seeing now it is to these we preach and not to the *Romans* or *Galatians*, &c. and therefore are especially to insist on these truths, duties, sins, &c. which concern most the present case; thus one may insist on some things that are less touched in these Epistles, they being more necessary now, and pass more shortly these questions that are most insisted on in these Epistles, because now not so edifying; and in so doing, the intent of the holy Ghost may be nearest attained, because it was upon that account of edification that *Paul* insisted much on some things because then their case required it, when he did more shortly pass over other things: in this also a Minister may have some respect to his own gift, as its most fitted for explaining of difficulties, instructing in positive truths and cases, convincing, wakening, or comforting, &c. and so one may more ordinarily follow one strain which would not be so pertinent to another, as it seemeth there hath been a difference in this respect between the sons of thunder and the son of consolation.

Further by occasion of this Angel's saying to *John*, thou must prophesie again, &c. It may be enquired if preaching over and over the same matter be allowable and useful? For answer we say, 1. That the end of preaching being edification, we conceive it is not unsuitable often to insist in the same things, even though they be known and understood by the hearers; because the end of preaching is not only to inform the judgment, and alway to bring some new increase to that, but to further conversion by the espousing of hearts to Christ, and holiness, by pressing the practising of known duties, and eschewing of known sins; and this being certain, that many who know the Doctrine of Faith and Holiness also, are yet defective in their practice, There is need therefore both in invitations, exhortations, expostulations, reproofs, &c. often to come over the same thing, especially where the Truths are material and concerning in their use, and the duties are slighted, or the sins followed in the place. In that case it ought neither to be grievous to the Minister to insist on the same things, as the Apostle speaketh, *Phil.* 3. nor yet be stumbled at by the people, although it will require denieness in both; yea, sometimes it may be more difficult for a Minister to get over his own inclination that aimeth to carry some new thing, and not again to carry the same message, which may both relish now less to himself and to the hearers than formerly it did, yet ought he not to think it grievous if it be safe for them. This we see the Prophets of old did with their hearers, using the Word as an hammer (as it is called by *Jeremiah*, 23. 29.) by doubling strokes to bear that in, which at first took no impression: This way also the Lord followeth in the Gospel; How often presseth He the necessity of Repentance, the difficulty of entering to Heaven, what concerneth the abounding and hazard of hyocrisie, the necessity of His own suffering, of self-denial and bearing the Cross and other Truths, in themselves needful, and to the present hearers useful? This is also used by the Apostles, who in their Preaching and Writing, insist again and again in the same things: and although often hearers itch after some new thing, yet are Ministers not to feed that humour. *Chrysostom* hath a notable expostulation with his hearers to this purpose on the 2 *Thess.* Chap. 2. *Hom.* 3. saith he, some heavers say, why should we come to Church, to hear the same things over and over? to these he saith, Are ye not ready to go to Theatres to hear the same things, to the running of horses to see the same things? &c. doth not (saith he) the same Sun rise again, and its light is not the worse? do we not use the same food for our bodies, and they are

*are not the less wholesome? Or, if ye have often heard them, ought ye not then to profit by them, and the better to know them? Others again (saith he) when enquired in any thing, were ready to reply, we heard it but once: whereby he would bear out the necessity of repeating the same things, and the inexcusableness of a people that yet could neither endure it, nor profit without it. 2. We say, Ministers would do this, so as it may neither foster their own laziness nor become trivial and less savoury to the hearers, but in respect of his own liveliness and the weightiness of the manner of his proposing it, & in respect of these expressions and manner of following it, it would be so conveyed as being indeed a new Sermon, though an old matter: hence we see, that in the same matter our Lord Jesus multiplyeth parables, and sometimes one way and sometimes another way presseth the same thing, as we see by the parable of the sower, Mat. 13. of the labourers, who were in their opinion first, yet made*

*last, Chap. 20. of the marriage supper, and wedding garment, Mat. 22. of the foolish Virgins, Mat. 25. and many other ways Paul also, Phil. 3. prefaceth to this, and giveth the reason of it, thereby to remove stiffness and itching from the hearers, or any prejudice against his practice which might mar the weight or fruit of the thing which he is to insist on; which practices, no question, may be laudably followed by Ministers both in the matter and manner; and Truths so preached ought to be received by the hearers as healthfull to them to feed upon the second or third time, as if they had never formerly heard them; yea, thereby they ought to gather the necessity of their use-making of these Doctrines, reproofs, &c. more now than if once only they had heard them, lest they constrain the proposing of them again unto them, and draw on more guilt by not making use of them now again and again repeated and pressed, than if they had heard them but once.*

## LECTURE I.

### CHAP. XI.

Verf. 1. **A**ND there was given me a reed like unto a rod, and the Angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the Temple of GOD, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

2. But the court which is without the Temple leave out, and measure it not: for it is given unto the Gentiles, and the holy city shall they tread underfoot forty and two moneths.



He Lord hath discovered the first part of the consolation against the two first woes, to wit, a comfortable outgate which the Church should have from under them, and a reviving again of the Gospel after that: a type & confirmation whereof was Johns eating of the little book: but seeing this is suspended until the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and it might be a doubt, what became of the Church till then, or if there were any during the time of Antichrists prevailing. In this Chapter to verf. 15. the estate of the Church in reference to that time, is particularly described: wherein is shown, that even then there should be a Church provided for by God, and that there should be prophets and preachers of the Gospel, although both Pastors and People should be few and in a low estate outwardly.

That this doth relate unto the condition of the Church under Antichrist, and belongeth to that time as contemporary with the fifth and sixth trumpets, will appear. 1. This belongeth to the state of the Church immediately preceeding the last wo, or seventh trumpet, by which Antichrists fall beginneth; and it doth describe the estate of the Church for the forty two moneths immediately before his fall; and therefore must necessarily contemporate with his dominion and height, which doth immediately also for the same space of time preceed the seventh trumpet. 2. This part of the prophesie holdeth forth that trial of the Church, when her Prophets prophesie in sackcloth and have war with the beast: which trial endeth with the beasts prevailing over them, and their rising again and being taken up to heaven; but that trial, in the continuance of it, a thousand two hundred and threescore dayes, is the same with the beasts dominion, Chap. 13. and closeth with his begun fall: and therefore must belong to the same time. 3. These times of forty two months, one thousand two hundred threescore

dayes, time, times, and half a time, &c. five times mentioned, Chap. 11, 12, and 13. being of equal extent, must be understood to be contemporary one with another; for, that successively they should follow one another, cannot be thought, beside the agreeableness of the same matter and state of the Church under all of them, and the common beginning & rise which all of them have: but it is certain, that forty two moneths (Chap. 11.) relate to the Antichristian tyranny: therefore we must understand this giving of the outer Court to the Gentiles, and this prophesying for the like time, ver. 2, and 3. of the same also. 4. The measuring of the Temple and treading of the outer Court, do contemporate and belong to the same time: for, when the Temple is to be measured, the outer Court is cast out, & contra, the outer Court is left out, when the Temple is measured: and therefore seeing the leaving out of the outer Court belongeth to the time of Antichrist, That part of the measuring of the Temple must contemporate with it also: for, the describing of the Church, by comparing it to the Temple and to the outer Court, is not to distinguish the visible Church in respect of time successively; but to distinguish some in it at the same time from others, that should be really differenced before God, as the Temple and outer Court used to be in respect of the ceremonial differences that were between these two; beside, the scope formerly laid down, and other circumstances of the exposition being well considered, it will be found that the intention of the spirit is not to delineate the Christian Church from its beginning, but from this time of Antichrists rise, that contemporateth with the Prophets their prophesying in sackcloth.

The state of the Church then is two wayes set down; First, More generally in respect of the condition of the Church herself, ver. 1, 2. Secondly, More particularly in respect of her Prophets, unto ver. 14. That by putting these two together, it may be seen what posture she was to be in. Both these descriptions.



descriptions are set down with allusion to phrases in the Old Testament. The state of the Church in respect of her self, during that time, is again two wayes set out, 1. With reference to the true worshippers, *vers. 1.* 2. With reference to false and hypocritical corrupted worshippers, *vers. 2.* That we may understand it, there is a threefold allusion in the words. The first, is to the description of the material Temple, where there were (as we may gather from 2 Chron. 4. 9. and what goeth before) three several courts, the one called the *most holy*, into which the high Priest, only once a year entered. The second without that, was called the *court of Priests*. The third is called the *great court*, or *court of the people*, which was without all, and next to the city: unto this court the multitude of professing worshippers had access at their solemn times: and this allusion holdeth forth, that as the inner court, being compared with the outter, was small: and as many had access to this, which were not admitted to the former; so, during this time, the number of true worshippers shall be few, though the multitude of nominal professors shall be great, because the Lord will set apart some few to himself, and disown the rest, even as if under the Old Testament he had appointed the outter court to be divided from the inner, the greater part had been rejected, but the better part reserved, so shall it be in the Gospel-church at that time, some few like the Temple shall be ordered and set aside for himself, and the visible body of Professors left out without any such special care, which leaving, or *casting out*, we conceive to be the same, as not to be sealed, and so taken notice of by God, *Chap. 7.* And this measuring will be found to belong to the same persons who are sealed.

The second allusion of measuring respecteth that vision, *Ezek. 40, 41, &c.* And it may signifie, 1. the Lords putting a difference amongst Professors of that time; and that profession will not be sufficient to make men pass, but they must be tried and put to the touchstone: and that the Lord will do so. 2. It holdeth out the Lords setting apart of some for himself in opposition to others who are neglected; thus the land was to be measured, *Ezek. 47. 18.* and for this cause *Israel* is often called the rod of Gods inheritance, *Psal. 74. 2. Jer. 10. 16, &c.* as measured by to him, in opposition to all other Nations. 3. It signifieth a care and special oversight of the Lords in reference to these in the Temple beside others, as if he were building and preparing a house for them, even like a little Sanctuary to rest in during that time. Thus measuring of the Temple here is opposed to the *casting out of the outter court to the Gentiles*, which is not to be measured, or so taken notice of by the Lord; and this agreeth with that, *Chap. 12. 14.* of providing a place for the woman (*i. e.* the Church) during the same time. And lastly, this measuring of the Temple, is opposed to the opening of it, *Chap. 15.* And opening of it there being to be understood of an enlarged estate of the Church, and bringing of the Gospel to open light, this here must signifie a secret retired state of the Church wanting that splendor and visibility of Ordinances which it had before this time, and which after the seven trumpets sounding it was to have.

A third allusion is unto *Daniels* prophesying of *Antiochus* his making desolate of the material Temple, *Dan. 7. 13.* and so the meaning will be, That as the Church of the *Jews* and their Sanctuary was tread upon, during such a time under *Antiochus*; so shall the visible face of the Church be abused and overrun by Antichrists followers during his tyranny over the same. Yet still will the Lord preserve a remnant as in that former case.

*Vers. 1.* Now it will be easier more particularly to clear the words: wherein there is, 1. Something done. 2. Something said. And there was given unto me a reed like unto a rod. A reed is used in measuring, either to find out the quantity of a thing, or the regularity of a thing, or for the dividing and setting apart of it. It is given to *John*, not only to signifie the

smallness of that number which should be set apart for God, (for as numbering importeth fewness, so measuring doth smallness) and the regularity of their worship beside all the rest of the world: but to shew, that the Church during this time was not to be reckoned by the multitude, but that the rule behoved to be applied for discerning of it, and these who were furnished by a measuring reed should find it out and none other. That which is said, may be taken up in these three, 1. What he should measure. 2. What he should not measure. 3. Why? his direction what to do, is, *Rise, and measure the Temple of God and the altar, and them that worship therein.* The Temple here, is that which we called the Court of Priests, where the altar stood; it is opposed to the outter Court in the following verse. *These that worship therein*, point out true worshippers, who rest not in the outter court with the multitude (to whom they are opposed, *ver. 2.*) but like Priests to God they worship him in the Temple where the altar is, signifying the continuance of the prescribed worship in opposition to the will-worship of others, particularly their continuing to make use of Christs sacrifice, which is signified by the altar which the multitude did not enquire for. These are to be set apart (after they are tried and found) for God himself. The second part of the direction, is, what should not be measured, and that is the court without the Temple, *leave or cast it out, and measure it not*, saith he: by which is understood the visible face of the Christian Church, which in respect of external Professors is like unto the outter Court, during the Jewish service. This not measuring of it, implyeth a slighting and misregarding of it, and not setting it apart as the former, as the following words do clear.

3. The reason of this, is, *for it is given to the Gentiles, and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two moneths.* Where, 1. the state of the outter Court is set down to be given to the Gentiles. 2. The height and continuance of their tyranny is expressed, *the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two moneths.* By the Law, Gentiles were inhibited the congregation and assembly of the people in this outter Court; so this giving to the Gentiles, must suppose a profaning of the visible Church, and corrupting and mixing of publick Ordinances and Worship, even as admission of Gentiles to the outter court would have been under the Law; for which *Paul* was complained of, *Act. 21.* By *Gentiles* is to be understood not properly Pagans, for they are not capable to possess the visible Church, and to partake its name: for, it continueth to be the outter Court even while it is given to them, and is tread on by them. Beside (as was hinted) the time of their treading of it, will fall under the time of Antichrists sitting in the Temple of God; and therefore it must be understood of his vassals and followers. They are called Gentiles in this respect, that although they seem to bear the name of Christians, and so did not destroy but possess the outter Court, and retain the name of the Christian Church; yet in respect of their defection from the purity of the Gospel, and of the superstitious and idolatrous worship propagated by them, they are rather to be accounted Gentiles than Christians; in which respect, their head Antichrist (*Chap. 13.*) is said to have a name of blasphemy, even as the Pagan heads had which went before him. This is further explained in the following expression, *the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two moneths.* What he called the outter Court formerly, here he calleth the *holy city*, to wit, the visible Christian Church, whereof *Jerusalem* (called the *holy City* for the Ordinances of God in it) was a type. *They shall tread upon it*, that is, shall possess it, brooke the name of it, pollute it, marring the beauty of it, and that with an high hand as the Temple was polluted during *Antiochus* his tyranny.

3. What is meant by the time, *forty and two moneths*, is not so easie to determine: we think in all this there is an allusion to *Dan. 7. 24, 25, &c.* where *Antiochus* his trampling *Jerusalem*

*Jerusalem*, was limited to a time, to wit, one year; times, to wit, two years; and the *dividing of a time*, to wit, halfe of a year, or some odd time more than three years: which holdeth forth in general, that as *Antiochus* got great power over the Jews and their Temple, so Antichrist shall get great power over the Church. 2. That as the people of God, His Ordinances and Service were brought very low by him (who may well be Antichrists type) so shall the Church be by Antichrist. 3. That as that cruelty was limited and bounded for years; yea, for dayes, so shall Antichrists be, who in many things is described from *Antiochus* for that end, as *changing times, having a mouth speaking blasphemous things, &c.* And that there is an allusion to this time of *Daniel* in all these times, *Chap. 11. 2, 3. 12. 6. and 13. 5.* It appeareth by *Chap. 12. 14.* where, what was spoken (*vers. 6.*) of the womans flying, by dayes, he expresth thereafter in *Daniel's* words, *time, times, and half a time, &c.* all coming to one sum. So that as *Antiochus* for so long, till the time set of God expired, trod on *Jerusalem*, Temple and Ordinances, so shall Antichrist during his appointed time: with this difference, the inner Court is reserved from Antichrist; though he cometh very near it, yet he wasteth not all: even as in *Jerobels* persecution (which probably was three years and an half) there were seven thousand reserved. The reasons moving us to expound times throughout this prophesie by a general indefinit time, rather than particularly to determine, are, not because they are not determined by God, for that is meant certainly; But, 1. because He hath reserved the discovery of times and opportunities especially in His own power, *Acts 1. 6.* neither think we it edifying so much to insist in these. 2. Because there are so many difficulties in applying them particularly; for, it is not certain how many dayes ought to be assigned to every moneth, if to all thirty, after the *Grecian* account, or to some thirty one, after the *Julian* account, which goeth to make up the year to us; yet that doubt is helped here by the alteration of moneths into dayes, &c. 3. Because Historians differ in their setting down of events and matters of fact, some ascribing them to one year, some to another, whereby application particularly must be exceeding various, as men choose what history to follow or whose reckoning to lay weight on. 4. In taking times definitely, it will be very hard to agree men with themselves, as, whether to take them all literally and properly, or all prophetically and improperly: For, the thousand years in the 20. *Chap.* is by the most part taken literally. Again, 1260. dayes is expounded for so many years; and why it should be understood properly in one place and prophetically in another, is hard to give the reason, especially considering that these places, *Numb. 14. and Dan. 9. and Ezek. 4.* whereon this opinion of dayes for years is built, seem not sufficient to bear it; for, these places are particularly expounded by the Lord to signifie so many years, and so to be understood, and so cannot be a precedent except in such cases, where by circumstances we may evince the same to be intended in that particular application: yea, by this opinion, it will be hard for a man to reconcile his thoughts, as, compare this time of Antichrists reign with that of the devils restraint, *Chap. 20.* it is hard to say the devil is restrained when Antichrist his special Minister and *Mahomet* prevaleth, and he in them reigneth, yet there cannot be so many years as to allow strictly to each of these so long a time by particular application, except they fall in one time together; for, it would take 2260. years successively. If it be alledged from the common rule, that whole, compleat, and even numbers in reckonings of this and other prophesies, as *ten dayes or times, two hundred thousand thousand horse-men, Chap. 9.* and the like, are to be taken indefinitely, but not so of broken numbers as 1260. dayes, *three dayes and an half, &c.* *Ans.* 1. What rea-

son can be given from the Scripture to prove the one is definite and not the other, 1260. more than ten dayes. 2. All odd times may be resolved in some whole, odd years in whole moneths, or in dayes or so many hours. 3. Why rather are forty two moneths here to be understood prophetically than five before, *Chap. 9.* and why not five there, as seven, *Ezek. 39*? 4. Even many odd numbers are indefinite in other things, as seven thousand men were killed, *vers. 13.* a thousand six hundred furlongs, *Chap. 14.* yea, of broken times, *Chap. 8.* half an hour, and 144000. that were sealed, are odd; even these who make the rule take sometimes unbroken times definitely, as that of the thousand years, *Chap. 20.* And can there be a solide application of three dayes and an half, in which the witnesses are dead, to any definite time, more than to shew a short time in comparison of their prophesying? yet, that all is determinately known to God, is not to be disputed: yea, why the number of dayes more than the number of horse-men, armies, spirits, &c. so frequently mentioned in particular numbers in this Book, should be definitely taken, will not easily appear? Beside, if all these numbers were definitely to be taken for so many years, then supposing the beginning of them to be known (which seemeth possible, otherways the particular determination of the time would be fore no end) it would follow that men might know to a year, month or day, the continuing of Antichrists reign and the performing of other great effects mentioned in this prophesie, which yet seemeth not usual to the Lord in such prophesies, who even in this respect hath reserved times in His own power, as was said. If any thing were objected from the Lords determining seventy years for the captivity by *Jeremiah*, and such like. *Ans.* That is in a particular, and was rather to dash the presumptuous expectation of a sudden delivery, and therefore was particularly and plainly revealed for that end. All which maketh us account it most safe to hold in the indefinite which is certain, and to gather the definite time rather from other grounds laid down in this prophesie, especially compared with the event and numbers here mentioned, than to settle upon them alone. And therefore because this number (which is so often repeated here in so various terms) is not altogether to be slighted, we shall shew what seemeth most probable to us on the matter afterwards.

Only, if any ask, why forty and two months or three years and an half is pitched on rather than any other time, for all these troubles of the Church, the Prophets prophesying, Antichrists reign? &c. *Ans.* That time is pitched on with respect to former trials of the Church, and includeth this consolation, That as God limited such and such enemies, and closed such troubles, so will he do this. Antichrist is compared with *Antiochus*, the Churches hiding to *Elias* fleeing while seven thousand were hid, See *Jam. 5. 17.* The Prophets prophesying alludeth to Christs performing His Ministrie for three years and an half, His suffering and rising the third day; so it is with them, their suffering shall have an happy outgate also.

From which allusions we may gather, 1. That the Church during Antichrist shall be in a very mean outward condition. 2. That yet there shall be some pure Professors reserved by God. 3. That there should be a great multitude professing the name of Christians and claiming the title of the visible Church, yet exceeding grosse and superstitious in their worship. Lastly, That for all their confident asserting themselves to be the only true Church, yet even then should they indeed be disclaimed by God, and as the outer court, being possessed by Gentiles could not ground an interest in Him, so neither should an external profession and pretension to the visible Church be a ground of any real interest in Christ to these pretended Christians.



## LECTURE II.

Verf. 3. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesie a thousand two hundred and threescore dayes clothed in sackcloth.

4. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

5. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

6. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the dayes of their prophesie: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

**T**He second part of the description of the Church followeth. *John* describeth the state of the Church at this time from her Ministers; and this is set down in three steps with the severall circumstances. First, their prophesying, till *ver. 7.* Secondly, Their death and killing, till *ver. 11.* 3. Their restoring, from *ver. 11.* And as it is not to be supposed, that these same were the witnesses that were raised but others in their spirit and power (as is said of *John Baptist*, *Mal. 4.* with *Luk. 1. 17.*) preaching the same truth, and pursuing that same Antichrist; so was it not to be thought, that the same witnesses should live and prophesie all that time: but that there was, and should be a succession of them some after others, so that they should never be wanting altogether till their testimony were finished. The Churches state is especially set out by the state of her Ministers, because they are linked together, so that it ever appeareth in them how it is with her. If persecution be, they are first in it, if it be hard with them it is not well with her and contrarily.

The Prophets are particularly described, *ver. 3.* 1. By their special work, to witness and give testimony for Christ against the corruptions and usurpations of these times: so Ministers, are called Christs witnesses, *Act. 1. 7, 8.* their work should be to be witnesses for mistaken truth, and against Antichrist. 2. Their number is set down, to wit two, a definit for an indefinit number.

They are said to be two, 1. because two witnesses are the least that confirm a Truth, but they are sufficient; so it importeth they shall not be many, yet sufficient to testify against these evils fully. 2. Because of allusion in the words following, where something of three couple of famous witnesses is attributed to these two mentioned here; in allusion (I say) to Gods way of making use of two in all dangerous periods of the Church, to wit, *Joshua* and *Zerubbabel*, *Moses* and *Aaron*, *Elias* and *Elisha*, in respect to which three couple, the following description of the witnesses here is holden forth in the effects of their prophesying both to friends and enemies; to wit, 1. they are as *Zerubbabel*, and *Joshua*, two olive trees, *Zach. 4.* 3. from whom droppeth the oyl to keep light and life in the two Candlesticks, that is, the Churches which are now few in number: and it is not by might nor by power, but by the spirit that they prevail. 2. If any will oppose them, fire proceedeth from them, as *Elias* destroyed the two fifties, *2 King. 1. 10.* so their enemies shall be destroyed as surely, and their word and threatenings shall take effect on them. 3. Their power is described by other effects, that as *Elias* by prayer prevailed to shut Heaven, that it rained not, and *Moses* and *Aaron* did turn waters into blood, and wrought other wonders in plaguing of *Egypt*, so shall they have. But all this in a spiritual sense (to denounce

judgements which shall truly take effect) as appeareth by this that the city spiritually is called *Sodom*, so all is spiritually to be understood. They have the power of the keyes, Discipline and Doctrine, ready to be applied when they find ground to revenge disobedience. And this is no less terrible than outward judgements are, that they preach freely and authoritatively, and that for many dayes, 1260. extending, according to thirty dayes in the month, to forty two months. In a word, all the time of the Antichrists reign, God shall have a Church though she be little, and Ministers though they be few: so long as he usurpeth, so long shall they testify; and though he may fight with them, yet till they have done what the Lord had commissioned them for, he shall not prevail. 4. They are described in their mourning weed or habit. They prophesie in sackcloth: when many idle bellies were well fed, and clothed richly, they were thus clothed; partly, to shew their outward, poor, contemptible and despicable condition in the world. There are not great rich men made use of for this service; partly, to shew how deniedly now under the cross they went about that employment, in heaviness, mourning for that declining generation that they lived in. In a word, it sheweth their condition to be the cross, and their carriage and courage to be suitable to it.

If it be asked, why the same time is changed from dayes to months, and from months to years? *Ans.* 1. To shew it is numbred to a month, to a year, to a day; yea, to an hour, as it is *Chap. 9. v. 15.* 2. To shew, that their prophesying was a daily work and task. 3. To shew, that it was a work of the day, as treading under foot is a work of darkness, therefore counted by months which the Moon ordereth. 4. It is years, to shew it will be of a considerable continuance; it is dayes and months for encouragement, that they may know these evil times shall have an end. 5. The alteration of months into days, will help to discern how many days are to be assigned to every month, for making up the total.

Lastly, It is marked, that it was given to them thus to do, *ver. 3.* which holdeth forth the special commission they had, and that not only to enter that station, but also to continue therein, implying with all assistance and success beyond what could be expected in the discharging of their testimony.

This power looketh especially to the Authority that God hath given them to denounce his judgements against Antichrists followers with the certainty of the event thereof, and that both temporal in due time to be fulfilled; but eternal alway according to that denunciation, *Chap. 14. 9, 10.* As often as they will, is not to be understood as if they had it committed to them at their arbitrement to use the keyes (even extraordinary prophets did not work miracles and prophesie in foretelling of events at their pleasure, or by any habitual power, but when

when and where it pleased the Lord so to bring forth such effects) but it holdeth forth the supremacy and independency of their power as to men; they were in the exercise thereof no wayes subordinate to that beast, which the world admired; and it holdeth forth the respect and Court (to speak so) which they have with God, he will refuse them nothing, and make good all his word spoken by them, as he had done in the persons of *Moses*, *Elias*, and these alluded unto; for which cause, these expressions are especially used, *Iustus Jonas* useth such an expression of *Luthers* effectualness in prayer, that *quicquid voluit, potuit*, which is upon the matter, agreeable with what is said here.

This prophesie of the witnesses, is foolishly applied by Papists to *Enoch* and *Elias*, as if they were to come in person and prophesie against Antichrist, with a number of vain circumstances: It is enough to say of this, 1. There is no shadow from the word of any such application to *Enoch* and *Elias*; and therefore more easily may be rejected than affirmed. 2. It no way contributeth to the scope, nor is consistent with what here is intended, which is to shew the low condition of the Churches visible estate in her ordinary Ministers. Nor, 3. can it stand with what is said of these two their glorified estate, and that both in body and soul, and of *Enoch* that he was translated never to taste of death, *Heb. 11.* It were strange to bring glorified persons from heaven to suffer, and to make them die most shamefully, whom yet the Scriptures exclaim absolutely from death: and although some persons have been brought to life whose souls were glorified, while their bodies were in the grave, yet where body and soul are both compleatly glorified, that can in no wayes be asserted, more than to be immortal as to the body, as well as the soul, and to be mortal, can stand together. There is another application no less strange, whereof *Grotius* is the author, of applying this to two Bishops of *Jerusalem* their testifying against *Simon Magus*. This is also destitute of reason, their being no evidence of the thing: beside *John* is here prophesying of an event to come, and that of great and universal concernment to all *Tongues*, *Nations*, &c. and that of *Simon Magus*, was past, and of no such consequence: beside the particular exposition of these witnesses killing and their being raised again visibly, will be enough to confute that opinion of it self. And the title of *witnesses* can no way be ascribed to these two Bishops, supposing such to have been; for, there were still many more testifying even against *Simon Magus*; and rather *Paul* and *Peter* should be by eminencie accounted witnesses against him, they living in his time, and encountering with him, yea, he being destroyed by the Ministry of *Peter*, if history be to be credited in this, and yet all the Lords witnesses, the Ministers, are represented by these two, and their estate described by theirs in opposition to the beasts followers, and all the rest of the world which rejoiced in their sufferings: it is a wonder how such an invention could be entertained by learned men, which to the most gross Papists is ridiculous.

If it be moved who these are, that the Lord acknowledgeth here for his prophets, or how any could be so accounted of then who had one common call with Antichrists followers?

*Ans.* 1. They are certainly ordinary Ministers, continuing faithful witnesses against Antichrist, as the scope of the place, and the opposition cleareth: for which the Lord calleth them *my witnesses*: and although the difference of the call be not always discernable to us, yet it is not impossible, but as there was distinct professors, and for a time (at least) particular Churches, so might there also be a distinct succession of Ministers; for this is certain, that the *Waldenses* in *Bohemia* at *Merindole*, *Pedmont*, and other places, had their own distinct Ministers without dependence on the Church of *Rome*; and *Sleidan* and *Thuan* make mention of two of them who were sent to *Luther* at his first appearing. But, 2. although that were not clear, yet one, called by that ordination that was continued in popery,

having the Lords seal put to it, by an inward fitting and disposing of him for that work, and blessing him in it, may be accounted the Lords Minister, as Baptism continued amongst them, was enough for initiating of one to be a visible Christian, and if abstracted from their corrupt practices, was enough with sound faith and a holy life to make a man to be accounted a true Christian, so was their ordination enough for the external part of a call; and a man having it, and being furnished with gifts and inward zeal to exercise them for Christ and not in a dependence on the *Roman* Antichristian Hierarchy, as such at least, not for promoting of their errors, but the edification of souls it was enough to make a man to be accounted a Minister of Christ, and not of Antichrist, even as the Scribes and the Pharisees as such, and as following their corrupt traditions and opposing Christ, were no Church-officers, nor plants of the heavenly Fathers planting: yet, if sitting in *Moses* chair, and preaching his doctrine, they were to be accounted builders; so much more here are these, seeing by their way there is a stated contest between them & antichrist. The reason is, because antichrist, and the most of his worship are accidents that intrude on the Church, and the worship of Christ, he setteth himself in the Temple, and therefore his corruptions and additions being removed, the worship is not his but Christs, even as if wholly he were removed the Church and Temple would still be the Lords; for, Baptism is not antichristian, nor doth it self initiate any in his Church, but as men by their after carriage devote themselves to him, and take on his name or mark; and therefore when one disclaimeth what is antichristian, his Baptism is to be accounted the Lords ordinance; so ordination and appointment of some for the Ministry is the Lords Ordinance: the restriction of ordination to such persons exclusively, and the adding of many ceremonies with rules for them to teach but so and so, that is antichrists addition, and may be removed from the former, so that one may have been ordained by them and yet become a preacher of pure Doctrine, even as they might be baptized by them and yet become professors of it; and therefore no doubt many, in all that time, were called to the Ministry by the Lord through these wayes of theirs, who did prove faithful witnesses for Christ against Antichrist even unto death; they cannot therefore be accounted antichristian Ministers who do not own that hierarchy, but are to be accounted Ministers of Christ, for ordination simply doth not flow from Antichrist, but as it standeth in a subordination to him, and is a step of that Hierarchy, and not in a subordination to Christ: now these not being in subordination but to Christ, are to be accounted his: Indeed it may be in respect of the ordination it self not discernable for the time, whether such a person be a Minister of Christs, or Antichrists; and it may be for some space one may mistake his master and continue in Antichrists camp, not knowing what his commission leadeth him unto, yet when in effect it is discovered, and he made to take up his task and to walk according to it, and the Lord evidently sealing his call to him, he is then to be accounted a Minister of Christ, when all accessory dependence on Antichrist is cast off. We do therefore say, that it is not the ordination of that time simply that was sufficient to make one a Minister of Christ, but ordination going alongst with Christs call, and dispensed according to his allowance (though it may be the dispensers intended no such thing) and having an after carriage suitable to a Minister of Christ, and therefore it will not follow from this, that all that were so ordained, as to the outward ceremonies and manner, are to be accounted Ministers of Christ, except they have Christs call concurring and evidenced in their fitness for it, and conscientious discharge of it; now, this being certain that for the most part in popery such were ordained whom the Lord never called to it, and who in their carriage never walked by his commission, or owned him as Master, Therefore are not these



these to be acknowledged as Ministers of his, but of Antichrist whose design they drive, and whose orders they obey; and therefore as on the one side, that ordination alone cannot constitute and evidence one to be a Minister of Christs if he walk not accordingly, so cannot their additions that are mixed in therewith prejudice the Ordinance it self, when in so far as it is from Christ it is owned, and when what in it is from Antichrist is disclaimed, even as it will not prove one of their members to be a true Christian that he is baptized, if his way be antichristian, yet where a Christian conversation, as to faith and manners, doth concur, it will be sufficient; and the additions that are amongst them in the administration of Baptism, cannot in that case prejudice that Ordinance, so is it here.

If it be asked why they are not only called the *two olive-trees* (ver. 4.) but the *two candlesticks* also, which (Chap. 1. 20.) are expounded to be the Churches and not Ministers? *Ans.* We conceive they are so to be understood here also; and it is done, not to confound Ministers and Churches, which in Chap. 1. are distinguished; but to shew the sibness that is between these two, and the likeness that is in their case; so that we may gather the implied case of the Church, from what is expressed of the Ministers, which is the scope here, to wit, that the Church should be few in number and low in her outward estate, as these two Prophets are: and they are two Candlesticks, to shew that proportionableness which is between the encreasing and decreasing of the number of Professors with the number of Ministers. By some this is taken to be an hebraism, as if it were to be rendered, these are the two olive trees, *with or beside the two candlesticks*, the copulative in the hebrew being sometimes to be so rendered. But the scope is clear, to wit, that under that type of two Prophets prophesying in sackcloth, is holden forth both the low condition of Ministers and Churches; and this sheweth the absurdity of both the former misapplications. And the Churches estate is rather described by her Ministers, than by her Professors, because in that time the continuance of truth is more discernable in the Preachers than in the Professors thereof, who may be very obscure in respect of any

combined profession; and because also the violence of Antichrist will be especially bent against Ministers, yet the Lords continuing of these two olive trees doth infer the being also of two Candlesticks whom they are to furnish with their oyl, and to give light unto. Hence *Observe*,

1. As our Lord Jesus hath a Church, so hath he witnesses in it: these two are ever inseparable, the Church and Witnesses; He may have Saints where he hath no Ministers, but he hath never a politick-body of a Church without Ministers. There is in this Book a strange connexion between a Church and Ministers; the Churches are the Candlesticks, and the Ministers the Candles; they are the olive trees that entertain oyl in the lamp; they have a special influence in keeping life in the Church, as the one is up, so is the other, and when the one is down, so is the other. It is a strange Religion that speaketh of doing for Saints and to promote their interest, and yet hath little respect to Ministers. 2. As Ministers meet with opposition, so doth the Church: and as the Church meeteth with opposition, so do her Ministers. 3. Ministers ought by their place especially to witness for Christ against corruptions. 4. When Ministers have most to do and meet with most opposition, God often furnisheth them accordingly with more boldness, gifts and assistance than ordinary. 5. Christs witnesses are a terrible party: for as few as these witnesses are, none of their opposites do gain at their hand; who ever hurteth them, shall in this manner be killed. Though they be despicable in sackcloth, yet better oppose a King in his strength, and giving orders from his Throne covered in cloath of state, than them: though they may burn some and imprison others, yet their opposers will pay sickly for it. This is not because of any worth that is in them, or for their own sake; But, 1. for his sake and for his Authority that sendeth them. 2. For the event of their word, which will certainly come to pass, and that more terribly, and as certainly as ever any temporal judgement was brought on by *Moses* or *Elias*. Fear to come in tops with this word, it is a sword with two edges, and will kill these who oppose and do not submit unto it.

## LECTURE III.

Verf. 7. *And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.*

8. *And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom, and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.*

9. *And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three dayes and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.*

10. *And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another, because these two Prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.*

**F**rom the seventh Verse he proceedeth to describe the Churches estate in the condition of her Ministers. The first step whereof, i. e. their prophesying in sackcloth, contemporary with the *Gentiles* treading the holy City under foot, is past: now follow other two steps further, 1. What was the low condition they were brought unto, and the beasts prevailing over these witnesses, killing and murdering them, to ver. 12. The last step is their Resurrection, and the making of them and their testimony and the state of the Church more glorious and visible than before.

Their low condition is set out, 1. in their death. 2. What went before it, v. 7, 8. And, 3. in what followed after in the enemies insulting, v. 9, 10. set forth in several circumstances.

The first circumstance, whereby this is set out, is the time of their killing, ver. 7. *When they have finished their testimony*, or were about to finish their testimony; for it is within the term of Antichrists height that this is done: what was called prophesying before is called their testimony here: because for that end they were to testify and preach. It is called their testimony, to set out that peculiar task which God had given them

as their work and errand that behoved to be done and ended, even as it is said of *John*, that he finished his course, *Acts* 13. and so *Paul* speaketh of himself. *2 Tim.* 4. Thus was it with Christ, He preached about three years and an half (who was the true witness) and could not be impeded till his hour came, and his testimony and work given him was finished, *Job.* 17. More particularly, It will be found to be about the expiring of the forty two moneths, which is one with the beasts coming to an height; for, as we shew before, these Prophets prophesying is contemporary with the beasts reign; their putting on sackcloth and mourning is occasioned by his rise; and so beginning together they go on in an equal length, and therefore must end together, that is, at the beasts begun fall, when they begin to put off their sackcloth. But the question thence riseth, 1. How can it be said, that their testimony is finished, and they are killed and reproached, when Ministers testifying is a continuing work? And, 2. how can it be said that the beast prevaieth more against the witnesses now at the beginning of his fall, than in the time of his reign? For answer,

1. Consider, That though now moe witnesses have appeared against Antichrist, whereby it cometh to pass that these two witnesses are about to finish their testimony; and as it were, to go off the stage, because God had now provided many for that task; yet the period of Antichrists absolute tyranny is not at a close, as we will find afterward. And the Lord wisely made His Church somewhat more visible before, that so this great act of his cruelty might be the more discernable, and that thereby marches might be the more clearly rid betwixt the period containing his height and that which immediately followeth, wherein is contained his decay and ruine.

2. Consider, these two witnesses testimony may be said to be finished when the manner of their testifying is finished or changed. That is either, 1. when their number is encreased and God giveth moe witnesses, by bringing some others in their tour. Or, 2. When they then testify more publicly and boldly who were before hid and scarcely discerned, (as the Church while she was in the wilderness, now they appear and openly avow their Doctrine, and give a publick visible testimony. Or, 3. When their sackcloth is something altered, and that contempt and reproach that was upon honest Ministers is somewhat diminished, and they begin to get countenance, (it may be by some great persons or Princes) their testimony may be said to be finished, though not simply, yet in some respect; for, this testimony of theirs seemeth to be especially intended as a check against Antichrists reign, when all the World should be going after him: Now, after such a long time, the Ministers step out more publicly to cry down Antichrist; he is irritated and fighteth and warreth against them, and by his discerning them better now than before, he cometh at them with outward cruelty more. And God having guarded His own testimony, and made the World more sensible of these evils by their publick appearing and suffering, in His righteous judgement and deep wisdom He permitteth Antichrist to prevail, that this testimony may be sealed by suffering and blood, in which the sufferers are overcomers, as it is, *Chap.* 12. 11. and Christ getteth no less testimony and victory in that.

The second circumstance, is, the party by whom they are killed, it is the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, to wit, Antichrist or the Pope: compare this with *Chap.* 13. and 17, 18. It is a beast making war with the Saints there, and here, who will be found guilty of their blood. First, He is called the beast, (as these in *Dan.* 7. and 8. are called) 1. For his power and greatness. 2. For his cruelty and inhumanity. Secondly, He is said to come from the bottomless pit, to wit, out of hell; So his Doctrine came from thence: *Chap.* 9. 1. he is called the angel of the bottomless pit, and cometh after the working

of Satan, whatever he pretend. Thirdly, He is said to be ascending, in the present time, 1. to shew his propinquity, that in its first steps he was beginning to work, *2 Thess.* 2. 2. That he rose insensibly and as it were by degrees till he was on his seat: and there is but one beast mentioned here, because these two, (*Chap.* 13.) are indeed but one and the same.

The third circumstance is in the degree of this, in three expressions, to wit, *make war, overcome and kill them.* *Quest.* What? was he not making war against them before? Yes, his rage, hatred and persecution was alway during these forty and two moneths. But, 1. It was not properly war; for, he had no considerable party to deal with, but some lurking hidden ones, he had all at will, treading under foot the holy City at his pleasure, *vers.* 2. Now, they are a publick party, and bid him some more contest. 2. His making havock of Orthodox Christians, was now more palpable, and his rage and violence at a greater height, having more fear, and more matter to work on. 3. This rage pursueth till death; yea, continueth after it; yet, it is not only to be restrained to bodily killing, but it may take in excommunications, banishments, forfeitures, proscriptions, and all these wayes used to undo his opposits. In sum, it is here shown, that when Religion should get up its head, and Ministers begin boldly and openly to preach the Gospel, then he shall rage, and leave no mean of destruction unessayed, and shall in a great measure prevail to the outward marring of its liberty for a time; and more especially, vent this his malice on the Ministers of it, and take away the lives of many, which clearly in *Charles* the fifth his time, in the wars of *Germany*, wars and massacres of *France*, Martyrdoms and persecutions in *England* and *Scotland* after Religion sprang up first, may be said to be fulfilled. By all which it evidently appeareth, 1. that after the forty two moneths immediately neither cometh the Church to peace, nor Antichrist to ruine, he fighteth and in part prevailed then. 2. That this prophecy belongeth and relateth especially and particularly to that time, when Reformation began, and the Popes Kingdom took a turn.

*Vers.* 8. Two circumstances of their low condition are further added, 1. That after death they shall not be buried: which cometh from two grounds, 1. from that beasts malice that was not content with the bodily death of Christs witnesses, but followed them with contempt, and exposed them to opprobry even after death, it being common and ordinary in the persecutions of *France*, *England*, *Germany*, *Helvetia*, &c. to keep the bodies, especially of Ministers, unburied after their death, long. So *Zuinglius*, being killed by the Popish Cantons, was thus insulted over, and the *Admiral of France* and many others at the Massacre of *Paris*. Sometimes their bones were raised and burned after their burial, as *Bucers* was in *Queen Maries* dayes. However, it holdeth forth cruelty, even after death, seeking to shame and rub reproach upon their very names and works, when they thought they had their will. 2. It proceedeth from Gods over-ruling providence, that will not have all memory of these witnesses testimonies buried; but though they be low, and as it were killed, and unburied, yet He maketh their enemies insulting over them in their low condition, the forfeiting, imprisoning, banishing and keeping of them under restraints, a mean to keep their testimony alive. So that though the witnesses be despicable to them, and they think now that they are down, and shall never rise again; yet there is a testimony visible, and they are witnesses above the ground still; and things are not desperate, but even these witnesses in their death, imprisonments, &c. witness and overcome.

The second circumstance in this Verse, is, the place where it shall be. It is in the street of the great City, spiritually called, *Sodom and Egypt*; by this City is certainly understood *Rome*, yet so as it is not only meant that Town, as it is within walls, but



but that Empire (*urbs and orbis* being at that time when this was written almost equal) called the *great City*, Chap. 17. ult. that reigneth over the Kings of the earth; and the privileges of this City spread as far as their government did: in which respect *Paul* calleth himself a *Roman* born, as being born of a City or Parents priviledged with that liberty. And it is observable when in this prophesy he speaketh of *Rome*, he doth it ever eminently, *the great City, the great whore, B A B Y L O N THE GREAT*, Chap. 17. 5. and 18. 2. and of no other he speaketh so, save of the new *Jerusalem* in opposition to it.

This great City is set out in three properties, which are spiritually, that is, mystically to be understood; So, 1 *Corint. 11*, they all eat that spiritual food, &c. that is, something represented by these names, which is to be understood in a spiritual sense and not literally, but as she is called *MYSTERY, B A B Y L O N, &c.* Chap. 17. 5. because there is a mysterious resemblance, so here she is called *spiritually Sodom*, that is, for luxury, pride, fulness of bread and spiritual uncleanness, abominable, *Ezek. 16*. 2. *Egypt*, that is, having and exercising a spiritual tyranny over Gods people, and abounding in spiritual Idols, as *Egypt* did in a more gross way, for which *Israel* could not sacrifice among them. 3. It is said, that *our Lord was crucified there*: not literally, but spiritually, as the word before cleareth, and as that word also doth clear, that is, either not only was He crucified at *Jerusalem*, but also there, or it is spiritually *Egypt*, also spiritually our Lord was crucified there, which cannot agree to *Jerusalem*, neither to *Egypt* nor *Sodom* at that time literally taken; neither were it any mystery, or spiritually to be understood of *Jerusalem* (which never getteth the name of the great City) literally. And it is rather designed by that paraphrase, *where our Lord was crucified*, than by *Jerusalem*, because mystically the true Church is still in this Book set out by that. This part of the description agreeth to *Rome*. 1. In that under its dominion, *Christ* was crucified, and by its Authority, to wit, by a President of theirs *Pontius Pilate*; for, He was delivered to the Gentiles. 2. In respect of His Members, Ordinances, &c. there He had been long persecuted and crucified in them and put to open shame, *Heb. 6. 6.* In the street of this City, that is, publicly by their Authority, as malefactors used to be in the streets: this is not private murder, but open avowed persecution. See for this, *Petrarcha, lib. Epist. sine titulo. Epist. 16.* who wrote three hundred years since.

This is amplified in the 9, and 10. *vers.* In the 9. *vers.* 1. In the delight that all men shall take in the low condition of these witnesses, *they shall see them*, that is, they shall with delight behold it and hear it, and will not be content to have them buried; and this is done by all kinds, their hatred is universal. 2. The time is not long; and this sad condition of the Prophets, and mirth of this World, will change. It is but *three dayes and an half*, with an allusion to *Christs* being under the power of death, and to keep a proportionableness to the three years and an half before, an indefinite time certainly, and cannot be three dayes; for, then all kindreds shall not have time to see them and so make merry. 2. It is not literally to be taken; for, they are said to rise again, and their death must be such a death, as is consistent with that, and with the manner of their rising. 3. It is not three years for dayes: for, 1. no considerable application can be given that agreeth with it. That which interveneth between *Charles* the fifth his taking, and imprisoning the *Electors of Saxon* and *Landgrave of Hessen*; and *Mauritius Duke of Saxon* his making him again to flee, and the peace which was concluded at *Paussow* with *Ferdinand*, will in strict account be about five years and odds, to wit, from *April 1547. to August 1552.*

The third circumstance is *vers. 10.* their exceeding great

mirth and jollity, which is aggregated from the reason of it, in the end of the *vers.* *all that dwell on the earth*, that is, all carnal Professors of that anti-christian Kingdom (for the earth here, is opposed to the true Church which is called *Heaven*) shall make such feasts and cheerfulness, and use all signs of joy, which men do in their greatest mirth and upon obtaining greatest victories: See *Esth. 9. 18.* after their delivery, and *Neh. 8. 10, &c.* These are the greatest tokens of mirth. Let us consider the victory which is the cause, These two Prophets that before tormented them, now they are rid of them and at ease. We shall enquire in the reasons of these, 1. Why faithful Preachers are often a torment and torture to the men of the world, who neither can abide their consciences to be stirred, their faults touched, their designs marred, or lusts restrained? &c. such *Moses* and *Aaron* were to *Pharaoh*, the prophet to *Jeroboam*, *Elias* and *Micajah* to *Ahab* and *Jezebel*, *John Baptist* to *Herod*? &c. 2. Why a profane people will be so glad to be rid of honest Ministers, and yet well pleased with hirelings? *Ahab* could abide four hundred Prophets of *Jezebel*, but could not endure one *Micajah* that spoke the truth. The world is now swarming with the supporters of Antichrist, who live delicately on the fat of the earth uncontrolled, yet two poor witnesses of *Christ* are unsufferable: And, 3. Why the Lord often upon the back of a begun rise of the Gospel will suffer an exceeding nipping storm to arise against it?

For the first, faithful Ministers, especially in times of declining, may be said to torment the earth these six wayes, 1. Their word and testimony hath influence on the conscience, when it forcibly discovereth and reproveth the ill, which a hearer is guilty of: it is said (*Acts 7. 54.*) that *Stephens* free witnessing, cut the hearers that were guilty, to the heart, that is, when they cannot get leave to quench all challenges, and to sleep on, but these witnesses, by the power and evidence of the Word and Spirit, do condemn their deeds, and consequently themselves, That galleth them, and wanteth not influence upon profane consciences, though they stop it, as *Stephens* heard its their ears.

2. It tormenteth their will and affection, that when they would sleep on and delight themselves in these ways of their own, free preaching marreth their quietness, even as when *Elias* cometh to *Ahab* with this word, *Hast thou killed and gotten possession?* and so proceedeth in the threatening, 1 *King. 21.* he goeth home sad and all the pleasure that he expected in his new garden vanished; so saith the same King of *Micajah*, that he hated him, because he never prophesied good to him, he was always thorturing him as *Elijah* did, and as *Moses* and *Aaron* did to *Pharaoh*.

3. It tormenteth their corruptions and lighteth upon their Idols, by discovering and reprovng them, and so stirreth up their enmity, as *John's* free preaching did to *Herod* and *Herodias*; they touch folks sores, and that tormenteth them, though it be tenderly done; yea, some good men, as *Asa*, (1 *King. 16. 10.*) have been tormented with this and could not abide it; and when enmity and envy are awakened, they have a cruel torment, as we may see in *Haman* at *Mordecai*. There is no greater torment to a malignant heart, swollen with enmity against the power of Godliness in the Godly, than to have a faithful testimony against it: and this pain proceedeth not from any unskillfulness and untenderness in the Minister, but from the desperateness of their corruption, which is like some grievous sore that cannot abide to be cleansed or purged by the most tender Physician.

4. It affecteth and tormenteth their credit and pride, when their Religion is called superstition, idolatry, and no Religion, they cannot away with that; to be called guilty of such and such crimes, men in nature and as such cannot digest it; and faithful witnesses must tell them when they go to the left

left hand; yea, and to the right also, and lift up their voice for that end like a trumpet: hence the Pharisees say, they will bring this mans blood upon our heads, *Acts* 4. 5. and that tormenteth them, to call the Pope, Antichrist; and *Rome, Babylon*, must be pricking. This hath often made faithful Ministers appear intolerable, when proud humours disdained to have them meddling with their actions, much lesse to condemn them.

5. Their testimonie affecteth the ease and outward quietnesse of the world; for, men naturally love so much Religion as never putteth them to trouble; but where faithful witnessing cometh, it will not be content with a form, but it casteth their old wayes, and bringeth in new (as they suppose) and that (ordinarily meeting with Satans opposition in the world, and mens corruption,) bringeth changes, contests, wars and judgements for abusing this Word, which judgement the witnesses threaten: in this sense *Abad* calleth *Elijah* the troubler of *Israel*, *1 King*. 18. 17. And the Apostles are said to turn the world upside down: and from this, many say it was a good world before, but since these Ministers arose, there is no peace: hence some places of the world; yea, some Pharisees have more outward peace with formal Ministers; yea, with Idolatry than when Christ is preached: therefore Christ saith, He came not to send peace, but a sword; and thus the world thinketh if they were quit of some heady Ministers, all would be quiet. It is no marvel then that worldly men rage at this, and that it torment these who have their portion here only.

6. Men in darknesse have accesse to their private designs, but light crosseth their interest and so tormenteth them; for, the keeping of a good conscience, (which Ministers that are faithful must presse) maketh folks inflexible to these crooked ends which the world cannot abide to have obstructed or crossed: thus the Prophet that testified against *Jeroboam's* worship, crossed his intent, and so marred the securing of the Kingdom to him, as *Jeroboam* thought, and this made him hate that freedom: This may in part vex all sorts, but especially it is intolerable to great men who fret to be bounded either in reference to end or middles, and cannot abide to be reprov'd, which was in *Asa's* case formerly hinted; we may see it also in the three Children, *Dan*, 3. It galleth the King that a pretext of conscience (as he thought) should impede their absolute obedience to him: Kings and great men think there is no living with such Ministers, they are pests and debauchers of the people, they wrong States, outward peace and all, keeping folks from their own mercies, so some men call temporal designs, and this troubleth them: especially, when no obligation whereby others are win to flatter them, and heal their wound slightly, will prevail with them to make them go alongst as others do; they are then accounted implacable, and but enemies to mens persons, when they oppose freely their crooked designs. Seing then by these Prophets they were so tormented, it is no wonder they make merry: For, 1. now they suppose that they have much more liberty, so that they may speak and do and not be presumptuously quarrelled therefore. 2. Their enmity is delighted, which is like a wasp that feedeth on sores, counting that the time which they desired; and though no good reason can be given for this, yet are they puffed up with it, as if they had obtained much. 3. They have now free way to their own designs: when *John* is away, none reproveth *Herodias*; and *Abad* stood some aw of *Elias*, and he might and would have gotten folks with him better, had he wanted *Micajah*, &c. Faithful testifying against Popery, struck at many mens particulars. When *John*, Duke of *Saxon*, did ask *Erasmus* concerning *Luthers* Doctrine, he answered, first, merrily, he had committed two unpardonable faults, which by all means should have been abstained from, to wit, 1. that he touched the Popes crown. 2. the Monks bellies: this faithful witnessing is like the Angel

to *Balaam*, who would fain have been at the wages of unrighteousnesse and was tormented by his appearing to hinder him. The Apostle hinteth at this, that he and his Ministrie was despised by many that counted gain godlinesse, *1 Tim*. 6. and would not suffer for the crosse of Christ, *Galat*. 6. 12. This readily is a fore that tormenteth in all times. And here again, 3. further it may be asked, why the Lord suffereth His Ministers, and His Work (consequently in them) to be so soon trod upon, even when it is but beginning to peep out and appear; it seemeth that the Ministers and Professors of it, are then in a worse case than formerly? Or, what may be his ends, now to let the witnesses be trod upon, and all, as it were, to be cast in the hollow, even at the entry, so as in the event the Pope seemed to be more strengthened, and the Professors of Reformation to get a further dash than if Reformation had never been intended to be established? Answer, For these and such good reasons,

1. That He may make it appear, that it is neither might nor power, but His Spirit that beareth through His Work, which is then most clear when these fail, (as the Temple was immediately interrupted in its rebuilding, and partly for this very end) for then it appeareth to be He when nothing can do it, and yet the thing is done. 2. He will then appear in His glory, *Psal*. 102. and the lower the foundation be laid, and the greater difficulties appear, He getteth the more glory; as when *Moses* and *Aaron* go to *Pharaoh*; and when they are upon the begun delivery, it fareth worse with them for a time, and not only *Pharaoh* and his Court, but even the Israelites, *Exod*. 5. and 6. are offended at *Moses*, and their burdens are encreased, and *Pharaoh* venteth more malice, from which God getteth the more glory, and then the work is seen the more to be of Him, and He hath (as He must have) occasion of exalting His glory. 3. He doth it so soon, to be a confirmation to these witnesses and their successors in all their following straits: when He hath in His providence suffered them to meet with great straits at first, and hath brought them through them, these may in time to come be encouragements to them, as these miracles done in *Egypt*, were to be unto the people of *Israel* confirmations of their faith in following straits for ever. 4. It is for His peoples profit, they readily are carnal even at the entry of a good work, and almost think God engaged to owne them, however they carry in it: the Lord by some such crosse dispensation, curbeth or preventeth their presumption; thus *Moses*, in his going down to *Egypt*, is pursued and made to circumcise his son, to make him the more watchful afterward over his own particular carriage; and so possibly *Elias* is made to flee, even at his begun Reformation, *1 King*. 18. lest he should think all done, or take occasion to sit down. 5. It is done for trial at the entry, for many false friends are soon discovered, that have had but corrupt ends; much corruption, fainting and fretting unbelief appeareth among the generality of the Godly, but especially the carnal hearted, they, like the Israelites, would be back again, and now they get time to discover themselves. And enemies at the entry by this occasion, or advantage, are the more hardened, as *Pharaoh* was to pursue on; and so God hath more occasion to glorifie Himself. 6. By this the Lord saith, all that would follow Him, must take His way, and take on the crosse, for whatever be in the end of the day the crosse beginneth, and the morning is foul, and the wall is built in troublous times, *Dan*. 9. and He would not have any who engageth to be on His side, putting the crosse far behind, but resolving at first to meet with it; these that have an expectation to eschew trouble by taking them to such a work, will be mistaken. 7. Ordinarily a people at the beginning of a work, and Ministers at their first setting to, (for proportionally this agreeth to all that are sent, at their entry) are most tender, zealous, and have the warmest frame of Spirit then, and can abide, and will bear more then nor afterward, when



when that is gone ; at the rise of Reformation , it is a wonder what zeal and boldness will be amongst Ministers and People , whereas often readily when either that temper of spirit is off people , or they fittin up and become cold , they would not endure such trials ; and we may see it confirmed in our own experience . 8. Any opposition to a Reformation and some bringing of it low , maketh it often the more conspicuous and terrible when it is recovered again ; for , now , all eyes are fastened on them , and looking to them , and when they see them rise while they expect it not , it doth the more affright them as may be clear in the Verse following when these witnesses arise . 9. He bringeth all his works about by degrees and steps , that he may have out of every step multiplyed and renewed evi-

dences and occasions of his glory , as it were by so many severa miracles on Egypt : Now , if there were no advantage at no time to enemies , there would be but one delivery , whereas thus one delivery is manifold . 10. There is ordinarily something of a temporal greatness affected at the beginning of the Gospels rising , which fault the Disciples fell into ; that was also in Germany : this Christ not only curbeth with the Doctrine of the cross , but with the cross it self also , that they may be brought to deny themselves , and as he saith to Baruch , Jerem . 45. not to seek great things for themselves . All which are good ends and profitable to his people , and may make us all reverence his way , although it look strange like unto flesh .

## LECTURE IV.

Ver. 11. *And after three dayes and an half , the Spirit of life from God entered into them , and they stood upon their feet , and great fear fell upon them which saw them .*

12. *And they heard a great voice from heaven , saying unto them , Come up hither . And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud , and their enemies beheld them .*

13. *And the same hour was there a great earthquake , and the tenth part of the city fell , and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand : and the remnant were afrighted , and gave glory to the God of heaven .*

14. *The second wo is past , and behold , the third wo cometh quickly .*

**A**Ntichrist and his kingdom are now very glad , supposing the witnesses to be quite overthrown , never any more to appear in opposition to them , but that mirth lasteth not long , after three dayes and an half they are revived , and the publick face of affairs quite changed ; for , God taketh this opportunity of the low estate of this Church to manifest his work , and bringeth the preaching of the Gospel and the prosperity of its Preachers to a more conspicuous visible condition , than they were into before , by giving these witnesses (supposed to be killed ) a visible and glorious resurrection : which is set out in these two steps , 1. Their reviving from the dead , ver. 11. 2. Their glorious condition after they are risen , ver. 12 , and 13. Both which are set forth by several circumstances going before , accompanying and following after them .

By Resurrection here , we are not to understand literally the rising again and taking to Heaven of men once really dead ; the frame of all the prophesie which is figurative , and the scope of this will not admit that : but this Resurrection of the witnesses , and their glorious condition after it , is to be looked on as holding forth a more visible profession of the Gospel , with a greater number of preachers following their footsteps , and taking up that same testimony which these few oppressed ones under Antichrist did formerly bear witness unto . In this sense they are said to rise again , because their testimony reviveth , men coming with that same Spirit and Power , as if these were again brought to the world , as is spoken of John the Baptists coming in the Spirit and power of Elias , Matth. 17. 11 , 12 , 13. That thus it must be understood , appeareth , 1. This Resurrection is so conspicuous and evident that the enemies behold it , ver. 11 , 12. which looketh liker a Publick change of affairs than what particularly concerneth two persons , especially considering ( as was hinted before ) that the low condition of the Church is described by the low condition of the witnesses ; and therefore a change of the Churches estate to the better must

be described by the raising up of these witnesses . 2. It is such an exaltation as worketh fear upon all the opposers . 3. It is accompanied with a great earth-quake , and the ruine of a considerable part of Antichrists dominions , ver. 13. which sheweth it must be such a change as prooveth prejudicial and destructive to that kingdom . 4. It is a resurrection and good condition , in opposition to their former death and low condition , but that consisted mainly in the bearing down of their doctrine and profession ; this must be therefore in the vindicating of both . Lastly , This change is that which followeth and is expounded by the seventh trumpet , that the kingdoms of this world are become our Lords , &c. which we will find to hold forth a more free and glorious manifestation of the Gospel , after the darkness of Antichrist shall be over , and the Temple of God again be opened in heaven , &c. all which do more particularly explain and prosecute what is generally summed up and begun here .

The first step of this change , is set forth in these circumstances ,

1. In the time of it , after three dayes and an half , &c. a definite time for an indefinite , it is like , alluding to Christs lying in the grave , and signifieth this , that within a little time after Antichrists seeming to suppress the truth and the preachers of it , God shall again wonderfully bring it and them to light , as if they were raised from the dead . 2. The mean and manner of their reviving is expressed , The Spirit of life from God entered into them . It is like , this alludeth to the Lords creating man at first when he breathed the breath of life in him , Gen. 2. and to the Lords reviving the dead state of Israel , Ezek. 37. 4 , &c. which sheweth , that however it looked impossible-like to men , yet was it not so in it self , because God , who at first mademan , was to be the worker . And , 2. That the great mean effectuating it , was not humane might or power , but the Spirit of the Lord which he hath to communicate to such instruments , and at such times as he shall find expedient for prom-  
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ving of his work. 3. It is said, *they stood upon their feet*, and that so conspicuously that their enemies saw them: whereby the efficacy of the Spirit of life, and the reality and certainty of the effect following, is signified: so that instruments for promoting of the gospel shall unexpectedly appear when the Lord shall poure out his spirit, as if dead bones would stand up to resume their testimony; which is in sum the same with that type, *Ezek. 37.* 4. The effect, is, *great fear fell upon them which saw them*: the world a little before was insulting to look upon them, now their rejoycing turneth to terror: for, the more powerful, glorious and unexpected the restauration of these witnesses is, who formerly tormented them, the greater is their fear now, when their expectation of getting them suppressed faileth, and nill they, will they, this Gospel will come to light. The consequent of diminishing their greatness and interrupting their peace, proveth terrible to them.

Their glorious condition after their resurrection, is further expressed, *ver. 12, 13.* In these circumstances, 1. There is a call given them. 2. Their obedience, or the consequent following it. 3. Some effects are marked to accompany and follow their ascending. The call is several wayes set out, 1. It is *from heaven*: to shew a divine warrant, and an extraordinary call of God, which the first reformers after popery should have. 2. It is called a *voice*, and a *great voice*, to signify the distinctness and clearness of their warrant, and the weight it had on them for putting them to this duty, either by some external Authority, provoking them to it, or (which is most probable) some extraordinary instinct and impulse of the Spirit constraining the Preachers and Professors of the Gospel now to a publick separation from Rome more than formerly was. 3. *And they heard it*: whereby is shown, that though God had given many commands of separating from Antichrist, and of coming out of Babel in the former ages; yet were they not heard nor understood, even by many godly then living in that fellowship, and burdened with their superstitions, but now God giveth these revived witnesses at the beginning of Reformation to hear, and distinctly to understand his mind in this particular: and it doth imply also, that though many saw their practice, yet was not their call clear to all, possibly alluding to that of Paul, *Act. 9.* where though many saw a glimpse of the light about him; yet he only heard the voice that spake to him. 4. The great thing in the call, is, the duty called for, *Come up hither*, that is, to heaven, as the words following do clear, that the term from which, is the antichristian Church and World, and the low condition that Christs servants had by her means, is evident. The term to which, to wit, *Heaven*, we conceive is not properly to be understood of the glorious seat of the blessed, but of a glorious visible Church-state upon earth, (it being ordinary especially in this Book, to set forth the visible Church under this name) and so the meaning is, they shall not continue in their former sackcloth-condition, but God shall erect a visible Church distinct from Antichrist, which shall be, as to the purity and beauty of Ordinances and to freedom from Antichrists tyranny and persecution, in comparison of what formerly the Saints were obnoxious unto, like an ascending to heaven. That thus it must be understood, beside what was said at the entry, appeareth, 1. It is a heaven in opposition to the world formerly mentioned, which was that of Antichrist. 2. It is an happiness, opposite to their former low estate: now when they are revived, they are not permitted to live within the precincts of Antichrists dominion, and under his tyranny as before, but are called up from without his reach. 3. It is the same Heaven mentioned under the seventh trumpet, *ver. 19.* that is, where the Temple, Ark and Covenant is, and their ascending is the opening of that temple, &c. 4. It is such a heaven as that (*Chap. 12.*) that Satan is cast down from, as that the Man-child is taken up into, *ver. 5.* and 8. and

such an heaven as the everlasting Gospel is preached into, *Chap. 14.* 6. and that after the beasts begun ruine; but all these are to be understood of a visible Church-state. Therefore this must be so also, especially considering that these witnesses are called Stars, they are now fixed to shine in this Heaven of a visible Church-state, as put on a candlestick that they may give light to the world more than formerly they were in capacity to do.

Their obedience followeth, they *ascend up to heaven*, &c. meaning their taking on them that publick owning of the Gospel which they were called to, and the certainty of the effect, following the former call, such a condition followed indeed as they were called to. 2. The manner of their ascending, was, *in a cloud*, that is, gloriously and safely, as the Lord is said to be clothed with a cloud: their glory and safety is by divine power; it is like with allusion to Christs ascension, *Act. 1.* both these Resurrections being by one Power. It is said also to be *in a cloud*, because though it were discernable to onlookers, yet was it mysterious and dark to them, who could not discern, (through the many reproaches and imputations put upon the first Reformers,) the beauty of the work in their hand, and the glory of Gods dispensation to his Church in them. 3. It is marked that their *enemies beheld them*: they saw them dead, they saw them raised to their feet, and now they behold them ascending; which sheweth still a visible and remarkable change in the steps and progress of his Church, and the reality and greatness of it, which could not be marred by their opposers though they beheld it; which certainly would provoke their enmity, and increase their envy the more. They are called *their enemies*, not for any particular wrong these witnesses had done to them, but for the work in their hands, these witnesses should still have enemies retaining their enmity, yet were restrained from marring their exaltation, which sheweth that the reviving of the Gospel and down-bringing of Antichrist will be by degrees. In short, these two verses say, that the Gospel shall again flourish, and the witnesses thereof shall be placed in a honourable condition suitable to their profession, in despite of all their opposers.

In the 13. *ver.* this glorious condition of the witnesses is set out by four glorious concomitants going alongst with it, or consequents following upon it, 1. *And the same hour was there a great earth-quake.* By *earth-quake*, *Chap. 6.* 12. and *ver. 19.* of this same Chapter is understood great and sudden temporal mutations. By this we understand the great commotions which usually accompanie Reformation, whereby Kingdoms are put in an uproar, Satan and his instruments wakening up enmity against the Gospel, and the Lord powerfully carrying on his design, maketh the earth, as it were, to shake till he accomplish it. This did really fall out, (and it may well be thought to be the fulfilling of this prophesie) in *Germany, France, Holland, England, Scotland, &c.* when at first the witnesses were brought to a visible Church-state separated from Rome.

The second effect following upon the former, is, *a tenth part of the city fell.* It hath no name here, and therefore must be understood to relate to that called *the great city*, *ver. 8.* that is, the city having dominion over the kings of the earth, *Chap. 17.* *ver. 18.* that is, *Rome*, to be taken not strictly in respect of that particular Town, but more largely in respect of its Empire and Dominion, as was formerly said. It is said, *a tenth part* of this Dominion falleth, because by this publick preaching of the gospel, and the witnesses separating of themselves from her, a great and considerable part of that dominion is diminished and brought down: or, as *Chap. 14.* by that expression, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen*, is set forth not the destruction of a City alone, but the ruine of Antichrists Kingdom; so here, by the fall of a part of that City, we are to understand the begun ruine and destruction of that Kingdom, which was to accompanie the



reviving of light in the world, as is said, and was actually fulfilled in the withdrawing of *England, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, and a great part of Germany, France, Helvetia, Poland, Low Countries, &c.* from their former dependance upon the beast.

The third effect following on this, is, a great number of men, *even seven thousand men were slain.* In the original it is *Names of men*, pointing at some more eminent than others in this City: the meaning is, that as by the sudden ruine and fall of Cities, especially by earth-quakes, many inhabitants usually are destroyed: so by this begun ruine of the Romish antichristian Dominion, many of her followers shall be destroyed, and that of the most eminent and renowned among them: which may be fulfilled, partly, in the overthrows and defeats of Popish armies, but especially the overturning of *Abbeys, Monasteries, Cloisters, and Religious Orders*, whereby indeed a great part of that Dominion was eclipsed, and many of *Babylons* Citizens were cast out, and their habitations destroyed and brought to nought.

The fourth effect followeth, *And the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven:* which is not to be understood of a real work of Repentance upon all the remnant of that kingdom (for *Chap. 16.* even when the vials are powred forth, we find they repent not) but as at Christs crucifixion (*Mat. 27. 54.*) Gods hand was so discernable that it made many onlookers smite on their breasts, and acknowledge something of God to be there; so this sudden begun overturning of Antichrists kingdom, and particularly the pulling down of Monasteries and Abbeyes (formerly so sacred) shall be so remarkable, that many of that kingdom shall at least in profession renounce fellowship with it, and others be made to acknowledge something more than humane in this business. The scope is, to shew the extraordinary rinefs of Gods appearing, and the impression which it should have upon many formerly friends to Antichrists kingdom.

This 14. ver. (*The second wo is past, and behold, the third cometh quickly*) is to be expounded as ver. 12. *Chap. 9.* by it the march of the seventh trumpet is cleared to be at the begun change of Religion in the world, and to shew that what formerly hath passed, doth belong unto the former trumpets, tending to that scope, that *John* and the people of God might be comforted against the sad things foretold by the fifth and sixth trumpets: therefore, that which formerly was under a type revealed to *John, Chap. 10.* is in this Chapter by word (for his greater confirmation renewed and repeated.

Before we leave this part of the prophesie, it will be needful to inquire, 1. If these 1260. dayes of the Gentiles treading under foot the outter court, and the prophets prophesying in sackcloth be expired? and if the killing of the witnesses be past? 2. How, or what way this prophesie is fulfilled? that so we may take occasion to consider this time more particularly and compare the event in storie with this prophesie. In clearing of the first, we would not be understood as supposing all the trial of the Saints and Ministers to be past, or that, by analogie from these witnesses killing immediately after the finishing of their testimony, it might not be gathered that the work of God often suffereth great obstruction even after its begun rise, and that the saints and witnesses are most subject to great difficulties and straits, when the Gospel in their hands is even come to the birth, and bringing forth, as in the examples of *Moses, Elias, Zubbabel*, and the Apostles may be seen: we grant, that by proportion, such doctrines may be raised from this prophesie: yet, if we will more seriously consider the particular event and time prophetically aimed at by the Spirit in this place, we will find that these dayes here intended, are expired, and that this killing of the witnesses is fulfilled, and so that the seventh trumpet hath sounded, and our time is to be

reckoned as under it: for making out whereof, we offer these considerations,

1. The sounding of the seventh trumpet, and closing of the second wo, do immediately, or without long interval, follow the absolute and uncontroverted dominion of Antichrist, and his treading under foot the holy City fourty and two moneths; so that the controverting of Antichrists power, and diminishing of it, must necessarily infer the expiring of these fourty and two moneths, and the sounding of the seventh trumpet. Now, any acquaintance with the state of the Church during these 100. years past, in comparison of what it was before, will evidence Antichrists power to be in a great measure shaken, and his kingdom to be eclipsed, and that this cannot be called the time of his absolute and universal tyranny, and therefore must be subsequent to it.

2. It is clear that this ruine of Antichrist, is not instantly brought to a height, but is perfected by seven vials, *Chap. 16.* whereof the seventh trumpet is a sum. Seing then the expiring of these 1260. dayes of his domineering, cannot be restricted to the time of his total fall; because at the close of these dayes he maketh war against the witnesses and prevaileth, and not the whole City, but a tenth part thereof by their resurrection falleth, and the seventh trumpet followeth whereby his ruine is accomplished, it will therefore follow, that we must reckon the fulfilling of this prophesie of the expiring of these dayes, and the raising of the witnesses from the begun decay and the ruine of Antichrists Kingdom by the vials: and it being certain, that the vials are already begun to be powred forth, and also certain, that these vials belong to the seventh trumpet, which goeth alongst with, or immediately followeth after the witnesses ascension. It must also follow that this time falleth under the seventh trumpet, and so is beyond these former events, and supposeth them to be fulfilled.

3. That time, when *Nations become the Lords*, and when the temple is open, and the ark of the testimony is seen therein, doth belong to the seventh trumpet, as the exposition thereof will clear, it being supposed that before the blowing of the seventh trumpet, and during these 1260. dayes, that the kingdoms of the earth were not the Lords, that the Temple was shut, and that the Ark of the testimony or Word of God was not seen into it; and it being now clear that these events are fulfilled in our dayes, we must therefore look upon this time as belonging to that trumpet.

Before we confirm it further, we would remove somewhat objected against the fulfilling of this prophesie by some learned and worthy men ( *Mede and Roberts* upon the place) endeavouring to prove this prophesie of the witnesses killing to be yet to be fulfilled, and so those 1260. dayes not to be expired.

The 1. Object. is, This prophesie cannot be fulfilled so long as Antichrist continueth in such power, and reigneth with such freedom: therefore the fulfilling of it is yet to be looked for. *Ans.* This supponeth the fulfilling of his prophesie to depend upon Antichrists compleat destruction, which being carried on by many degrees under the seventh trumpet, as is said, cannot be granted. And therefore we say, the fulfilling of this prophesie and Antichrists absolute dominion, are not consistent; this is granted: but the fulfilling of it, and his begun ruine, though continuing to reign in part, may stand together, and must go together, as is said. Now it is granted by the same reverend Authors, that the ruine of Antichrist is begun, and therefore this prophesie must be fulfilled also. Otherwise we we must say, that this begun ruine, and his height can consist together.

2. It is objected, That the fall of this tenth part of the city is the same with the overturning of the seat of the beast under the fifth vial, *Chap. 6.* But that is not yet fulfilled; therefore neither this prophesie. *Ans.* This objection is grounded upon an unwarrantable supposition: For, 1. the City here spoken of, is not properly the beasts seat or *Rome* it self, but the dominion

dominion thereof, as it is expounded by that same Learned Author, upon *v. 8.* preceding. 2. The expression here of a falling of a *tenth part* thereof, doth evidently and manifestly differ from that total overturning prophesied of by the fifth vial, it being certain that the overturning of the tenth part is here to set forth a partial, and so a begun overthrow, distinguished from a total overturning threatened by the fifth vial: and therefore cannot be understood of the same event; But here the rise and beginning of that ruine is hinted at, which is perfected by the seventh trumpet and vials following.

The ground of this their mistake proceedeth from this, that they make the vials, at least the first six, to be contemporary with the sixth trumpet, and not to be comprehended under the seventh. For clearing this therefore, beside what is said in the preface, *Chap. 6.* and afterward on the seventh trumpet and vials, whereby is held forth the successive dependence of the first vial upon the blowing of the seventh trumpet, We shall further adde,

A fourth reason to the former three. That act of killing the witnesses, is the very last part of the height of the reign of Antichrist; for, he reigneth during the 1260. dayes preceeding, which is the time of their prophesying in sackcloth, and insulteth and rejoiceth in a most eminent way when these witnesses are killed, Therefore cannot that be contemporary with any of the vials which do succeed to Antichrists height, and successively carry on his ruine: seeing therefore it is granted by all, that Antichrists ruine by the vials is begun; and it cannot be denied but Antichrists triumphing over the witnesses, is, as it were, the last part, and very *Crisis* of his uninterrupted tyrannie, and so inconsistent with his decaying Kingdom; It must therefore be esteemed to preceed the vials, and so to be fulfilled. And therefore this being the last act of the sixth trumpet, wherein Antichrist is at his height; and seeing the vials each after other carry on his ruine, it cannot be thought that any of them, much lesse the first six, can contemporate with it.

5. It may thus appear, If the vials expresse a different estate of the Church (to wit, its flourishing and Antichrists weakening,) from that which the fifth and sixth trumpet expresseth (to wit, Antichrists height, and the Churches low condition) Then they cannot contemporate together, but the one must be supposed to preceed the other; But this is true, that they hold forth different estates of the Church, as the exposition of them will clear, Therefore cannot fall in one time.

6. We may add, that by the same Learned Author the time of Antichrists full reign, and the Prophets prophesying in sackcloth, are demonstrated exactly to be contemporary, having one beginning and continuance: and the expiring of either of them will prove the expiring of both, and infer the killing of the witnesses, which is immediately upon the back of both. Now, the time of Antichrists absolute dominion being expired, as is said, it must also follow, that the other two events in the prophesie, to wit, the Prophets prophesying in sackcloth, and their killing, must be fulfilled also.

Again if these 1260. dayes be accounted for so many years, and the beginning of them to contemporate with the opening of the seventh seal and first trumpet (as the same Learned Author doth assert) Then it will follow, that they must be ere now expired: for we have formerly cleared the first trumpet, and opening of the seventh seal to begin about the three hundred year or thereby, and therefore these dayes cannot be running (according to these principles) till now: yea, from that first Author, these things are clear, 1. That the witnesses prophesying, the womans flying, Antichrists reigning, and the treading of the outer Court by the *Gentiles*, do contemporate, and that with the first six trumpets. 2. That the womans travelling, her bringing forth, and the lifting of her childe to Heaven, *Chap. 12.* do contemporate with the first six seals. 3. He maketh

(*Chap. 12.*) that taking up of the childe to Heaven to be fulfilled in *Constantin's* reign and his admission to the Empire, as also that the womans flying and wilderness-condition (which to him speaketh out a freedom of the Church to Religious exercises though abused by her to much defection and idolatry, as was in the people of *Israels* wilderness-estate after their delivery from *Egypt*) doth take in the whole estate of the Church from the close of Heathenish persecution immediately till the seventh trumpet blow. And seeing both these will fall about the 300. or 310. year, It followeth that this prophesie in sackcloth must begin then also, and so cannot be continuing till now.

To be more particular in the application thereof, we think, that conceit or dream of the Papists expounding all so literally of an Antichrist who shall come of the Tribe of *Dan*, and that shall reign just three years and an half, sitting in *Jerusalem*, and building that Temple, and the two witnesses of *Enoch* and *Elias*. This dream invented by them to keep their Pope from being apprehended as the true Antichrist; this (I say) is not worth the insisting on to refute, as being so contrary to the frame of the prophesie past, and also of that which followeth concerning the beast, *Chap. 13.* for, certainly this trial being so long, as the great part of the Revelation is spent on it, and so many things to be done under it, it cannot be performed in so short a time.

In the application of it, we shall, 1. see what general characters may be drawn from the Text for helping us to fix the time. 2. See how the application may be made out.

In the first we intend not to be peremptory, yet these things may be concluded concerning it, according to the grounds formerly laid, 1. It is clear that the end of these fourty and two moneths of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth and Antichrists tyrannie, is discernable, being so clearly evidenced by the witnesses laying by their sackcloth, their death and glorious appearance again in a settled and secure condition. This certainly will fall in about the time that Religion was reformed, and the Popes tyrannie in a great part discovered and rejected. The fourty and two moneths, then must be acknowledged immediately to preceed this time of Reformation. This also will be confirmed if we consider that the sounding of the seventh trumpet doth immediately succeed to that time, and that the vials which begin to be powred out upon the Kingdom of the beast, do immediately follow this his height, and begin the change; which doth also evidence, that this change must be reckoned from the begun fall of Antichrist; and so consequently his height and dominion during these fourty and two moneths must be antecedent to this.

2. For its rise, we will find it immediately to follow upon the back of the Heathenish persecution under the seals, and to be reckoned from the sixth seal as immediately knit to it; for, this trial of the Church during these fourty and two moneths under and by Antichrist, doth begin with the trumpets, and immediately succeedeth to the former trial she had by Heathenish persecution. Therefore during the sixth seal, before the seventh be opened (*Chap. 7.*) provision is made against Antichrist by sealing the Elect, as it were, marking and setting a part some few to be kept clean from his corruptions: which sealing, being especially against Antichrist, and so solicitously to be gone about before the seventh seal be opened, or any of the trumpets sound, it doth evince this, that we are to reckon the beasts rise (and so the beginning of these fourty and two moneths) from the close of the sixth seal, and opening of the seventh or a little before: it doth also confirm this, that the beast, and the number sealed (*Chap. 7.*) in reference to him, are wholly contemporarie; but that sealing contemporateth with the beginning of the seventh seal which succeedeth to the sixth, and continueth with the beast to the end of the sixth trumpet,



as that Learned Author *Mede*, part. 2.<sup>o</sup> *Synchro*n. 1. doth demonstrate.

Again, the same thing is clear from *Chap. 12.* for the Churches flying to the wilderness & continuing there for 1260. dayes, is the very same trial, having the same rise and close with the beasts dominion, and the Prophets prophesying in sackcloth: Now from *vers. 6.* and 14. (being compared with what goeth before) we will find, that immediately this flying of the Church to the wilderness is upon the back of the Heathenish persecution, and the Dragons waiting to devour her; and immediately she getteth civil Authority on her side. From which grounds we gather, 1. That the close of these forty and two moneths of Antichrists absolute tyrannie will fall in *Anno 1559.* or thereby, in which year by publick Authority in a Diet of the Empire at *Ausburg* the liberty of Reformation and Religion was established, and the free profession thereof without any prejudice to mens estates, or civil privileges was enacted: for, though before that time Religion was practised in many places of the Empire, and other Kingdoms of the world; yet was there immediatly before that so great an eclipse in *Germany, England,* and other places, that we cannot reckon the witnesses to have ascended to Heaven before this. 2. Neither before this time was there publick Authority for the profession of Religion, but profession was a crime, mens liberty and privileges were restrained by it, the Protestant Princes Commissioners were not admitted to the Council of the Imperial Chamber; which, after that this pacification was concluded by *Fredinand*, was remedied.

Again, it is most usual to count the change of periods in the visible Church by the change of events in the Empire, and also to account these from its authoritative conclusions, as we will see in the close of the first period of Heathenish persecution, and Satans casting from Heaven, reckoned *Chap. 12.* following. Beside, it is not in considerable, that about this time Religion was again established in *Britain* by *Queen Elizabeths* coming to the Crown, *Queen Maries* having begun her reign, *Anno 1554.* and continuing in it for five years and some odd moneths, died the same year. Also it was revived in *Scotland* the year before, as it was in *France* at the entry of *Charles* the ninth his reign, *Anno 1560.*

2. We gather that the rise of this forty and two moneths reign, is to be reckoned from the year three hundred or thereabout, when the Heathenish persecution ceased, and liberty was brought to Christianity, as was formerly cleared, *Chap. 6.* This upon the former grounds must be acquiesced in, for timing the rise of the Churches flight, and Antichrists under-hand working, whatever objection arise from the application it self, as being too soon; yet that flight of the Churches being the second period of her condition, and succeeding immediately to the first, must be contemporated with the trumpets. And now, having thus fixed its rise and close, we may gather the duration thereof, which being supposed to be from *Anno 300.* or thereabout, to *Anno 1560.* or thereabout, it will extend in whole to us to 1260. years. And although at first we did not think it convincing to build the account of so many years upon the number of so many dayes, for the reasons formerly mentioned; yet considering that this definit number is five times mentioned under the same exact account, though in diverse expressions, which seemeth purposely to point out one particular definit number beside others; and considering that the event answereth this, or cometh near to it upon the former suppositions, We think, in this place, it is not unsafe to account dayes for years, being by the former characters of its rise and close, it is indeed found to comprehend so many years. And although at first (as is said) we durst not lay the weight of this simply upon the number of dayes; yet, being expounded materially by these foresaid characters, to signifie so many years, as

that is more plainly interpreted, *Ezek. 4.* we think it is not unsafe to yeeld to the light of the former reasons in this, (beyond what at the entry we were convinced of) that the time is definit here, as also in any other place where the like grounds can be given from the Text, for demonstrating of the time, without laying the weight upon the particular number alone. There are two objections to be removed.

*Objeſt. 1.* That this reckoning seemeth to begin the Kingdom of Antichrist too soon while the Church enjoyed great outward liberty and much purity also, And therefore it cannot be said, that she was tread upon, or did flee while she continued to be in so good a condition. *Ans.* This objection doth not arise from the Text, but from the seeming difference of the event in the application; and if it appear by the series of this prophesie, that the Church is no sooner delivered from Heathenish persecution, but she fleeth to the wilderness, and hath wings given her for that end, There is no seeming reason can have weight against that. 2. In the Scripture, periods of time are counted from the main, or last part of them, as when it is said to *Abraham, Gen. 15. 13.* four hundred years thy children shall be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and shall be afflicted four hundred years; yet being compared with other Scriptures, we will find that the continuance of the children of *Israel* in *Egypt* was not so long; beside, that for a time while *Joseph* lived, they were not afflicted, but well entertained. 3. It is often the manner of reckoning, used especially in this Book, to reckon a whole period of the Churches estate from what is most predominant in it: as for instance, three great periods of the visible Church are reckoned successively to each other in this Book. The first under the seals, is reckoned a time of persecution under Heathens; and the Church (*Chap. 13.*) is said to travel all that time, although there were many and considerable long intervalls of peace. Again, under the vials, Christ and His Saints are said to reign, although Antichrists Kingdom and profanity continue long very high in the world, yet is it called the time of his reigning, and of Antichrists down-coming, because from the beginning of that period it tendereth to that scope: so here, the first six trumpets being accounted one period, and Antichrists tyrannie being the most prevalent event under them, and his rise being long working under ground before it came to a height, even from the Churches first outward peace, if not before; we conceive, upon these grounds, it is not unsuitable to Scripture, or this Book, to reckon Antichrists rise from the beginning of that period wherein he riseth, cometh to his height and reigneth, which is during the prophesie of the trumpets. For this also more may be seen, *Chap. 12.* and 13.

The second *Objeſt.* is, That even according to this reckoning there will not be found 1260. years, seeing *Constantins* publick peace will be about the year 310. and it would seem that some years would be allowed for the witnesses killing that followeth after the 1260. dayes and goeth before the settling of Religion by Authority, which is their lifting up to Heaven. For Answer, we say, 1. It will not be unsuitable to comprehend the witnesses killing within the 1260. dayes; for, it being the lowest step of their sackcloth and the highest step of the beasts tyrannie or at least of his successe against them, it may well come in as the consummating of their trial, and last act of his absolute supream tyrannie; and it must be so, otherwise Antichrist will reign longer than forty and two moneths, if he kill them not for that time, Therefore some render these words, *when they shall be about to finish their testimonie*, and go off the stage, then he shall kill them; which agreeth well with the Greek. 2. If Antichrists rise should be reckoned during the sixth seal, and so supposed to preceed a little the first trumpet: it giveth the alarm upon his approaching appearance, the odds will not be so considerable as to mar this calculation, though by the number

of eight or ten years so of many it doth not jump : especially if we consider, that the Scripture, in the reckoning of years, striketh not so upon the particular time, but taketh some definite number near unto it, as if we will compare, *Gen. 15. 13.* and *Exod. 12. 41.* *Acts 7. 6.* *Gal. 3. 17.* In some of these places, the reckoning is 400. years, in others 430. Beside, however they be reckoned, the beginning of them must proceed either the Israelites coming to *Egypt*, or their afflicted condition in it, seeing, *Gal. 3. 17.* these 430. years are reckoned to intervene between Gods Covenanting with *Abraham* long before his posterity came to *Egypt*, and the giving of the Law after their deliverance from it. However if the periods of its rise and close hold, there is the less cause to differ in the particular account of the years.

For verifying the event according to this exposition given, these things are to be made out, that the Pope (whom we take to be Antichrist) hath tread upon the Church, and that his followers have possessed the title of the visible Church during that time, which we may the less insist in, because it is gloried in, and boasted of by his followers; and as *Bellarmin.* alleageth *lib. 3. de pontif. cap. 2.* before the Pope was pointed at as Antichrist by us, he universally flourished, but since that time did never grow but decrease, and lost many Kingdoms, reckoned there by him. Beside, it is evident from story, that though Antichrists height be not reckoned so far up, yet that he came to tread all under his feet during that period, experience through the world can bear witness thereof.

The second thing will not need much clearing either, to wit, that the true Church was few, and in a great part latent, and where it was discerned, ever persecuted: That which especially is to be made out, is, 1. That though they were few, yet was there ever some Church and witnesses kept pure from Antichrists abominations until Reformation was restored in the Christian world. And, 2. that about that time of the Reformation springing up, the Professors and Witnesses of this Truth were brought exceeding low for a short time, to their exceeding great contempt before the world, and to the exceeding great joy and insulting of the Popish party; which yet continued not long but ended with a more full authoritative settling of Religion than formerly it had. The first, to wit, that there was still a Church and witness during Antichrists height, may appear from these considerations,

1. If we consider the particular catalogue of witnesses which God raised up one after another to witness against the corruptions of that time, whose names and testimonies are particularly recorded by several Writers, particularly, *Itlyricus, catalog. testium veritatis, Cent. Magdebur.* *Foxe, book of Martyrs;* *Alstedii chronologia testium;* *Usherus de Successione Ecclesiarum Christianarum,* and sundry others. And if so much be known, we may gather much more indeed to be, considering the darkness of these times, and the great propension there was to suppress all that tended there away. 2. It is made out by *Master Foxe, White* in his *Way to the true Church,* *Jewel, Usher,* and others, that *Britain* received not the Gospel from *Rome*, and that in *England* there hath been alwayes some opposing his errors, until the time of Reformation came. 3. This may appear by the confession of adversaries, They grant that the *Calvinists* now are the same called *waldenses* and *berengarians* before; but these they say have been ever most dangerous to the Church of *Rome*, 1. Because it is of longest continuance, being from the time of *Sylvester*, who lived in *Constantine* the great his time; yea, from the time of the Apostles themselves say some of them. 2. Because it was more universal, and almost in all the earth. 3. Because it hath a great shew of piety, having a good life before men, and believing all things well concerning God, being only blasphemers of the Church of *Rome*, as *Reinerius contra Hæreticos, cap. 4.* affirmeth. *Inter omnes sectas quæ sunt aut fuerunt, non est periculiosior Ecclesiæ Dei quam pauperum de*

*Lugduno, tribus de causis, 1. Quia diuturnior; quidam dicunt quod duraverit à tempore Sylvestri, quidam dicunt quod à tempore Apostolorum. 2. Quia generatior: fere enim nulla terra est quæ hæc secta non serpsit. 3. Quia cum omnes aliæ sectæ immanitate blasphemiarum in Deum audientibus horrorem inducunt; hæc, scilicet, Leonistarum, magnam habet speciem pietatis, to quod coram hominibus jussu vivant, & bene de Deo omnia credunt, & omnes articulos qui in symbolo continentur, solummodo Romanam Ecclesiam blasphemant ac oderunt, cui multitudo facilis est ad credendum.* This *Reinerius*, as *Bellarmin.* asserteth, prefat. ad *libros de pontif.* wrote above three hundred years before him.

If we look *Bellarmin.* in that preface ad *libros de pontif.* and sundry others of their writers, we will find them very near draw a series of opposers of this usurped Authority of the Popes. It is true sometimes grosser faults are imputed to these *waldenses* and *pauperes de Lugduno* out of hatred, than they were guilty of; yet if we will consider *Bernards* writings against them, *Sermon. 65.* and *66.* in *Cantica*, and *Epist. 240.* it is evident that no manifest grosse crime is imputed to these (beside their opposing the errors of the Church of *Rome*) but such as they were calumniate with by the ignorance or iniquity of these times, as the great Historician *Thuanus* doth vindicate them. 3. If we will look particularly to the Church-story, we will almost ever find some visible party stand against the Church of *Rome*: for, the Eastern Greek Churches did never fully submit till the second Council of *Nice*, (which was *Anno 786.* according to some, or, *789.* according to others) Neither was that submission full without all contradiction, nor of long continuance; for, *Bellarmin.* in the preface formerly cited, reckoneth their secession or schism, as he calleth it, to have begun about the *1054.* year, and to have continued long after. In the year *1439.* the Greek Churches being affrighted of the *Turke*, sent Embassadors to treat with the Pope and these in the *West* for supplie; and these to obtain it, condescended to some articles different from their Churches, as the acknowledging of the Popes supremacie, the doctrine of Purgatory and procession of the holy Ghost, and the practice of unleavened Bread, for which they were Excommunicated by their own Churches, while the Council of *Basil* sate. About the year *1170.* The *waldenses* or *pauperes de Lugduno* began, (before that close of the Greek Churches with the Pope) as *Bellarmin.* *ibid.* citeth out of *Reinerius*. The occasion was this, one *Waldus* being stricken with fear by the suddain death of one walking in company with him, was put more seriously to seek God, and make for dying; whereby he came to discover the vanity of Poperie, as the badges of antichristianity, and so to drink in the sincere way of Faith in Christ: these who followed him, though exceedingly persecuted, yet continued in the *Alpes*, and other mountainous places and in *Provence*, at *Merinaol* and the parts about it, from the year *1200.* till the year *1545.* These, after hearing of *Lutbers* preaching and doctrine, sent two of their Ministers to him, with whom generally in their Doctrine they agreed. These continue also to this day in the valleys of *Piedmont*, *Angrougue*, &c. under the Duke of *Savoie*. After him followed the *Albigenses* in *France*, *Anno 1190.* according to some, who did both in their disputes and sufferings confirm that the Pope of *Rome* was the Antichrist, and that *Rome* was *Babylon*, and also sometimes by armes did defend themselves, as in the memorable siege of *Tholouse*, where God wonderfully protected many of them against great violence. After them arose *John Wickliffe*, an Englishman, *Anno 1370.* (*Bellarmin.* calleth it *1350.*) he revived the Doctrine of the *waldenses* and *Albigenses*; and it took such rooting in many places, especially in *Bohem*, *Hungary*, *Germanie*, &c. that they came to have great Armies in the fields; and after that *John Huss*



*Husse* and *Jerome* of *Prague*, who came to the Council of *Constance*, upon the Emperour *Sigismound* his safe conduct, were contrary thereunto burnt; they brought great Armies to the fields under the command of *Zisca*, he would have had fourty thousand men under him; he defeated the Pope, Emperour, and other Popish Princes in eleven several battels, although he had lost both his eyes: they continued also strong after him under one *Procopius Magnus*, and were called *Thaborites*. At the Council of *Basil* they had granted unto them the Scripture in their own language, Priests Marriage, and communion in both Elements, &c. All *Bohemia* were divided in three sorts, one acknowledging the Pope fully, another seeking Reformation in some points of Doctrine, the third accounted him Antichrist. They continued till after *Luthers* dayes, who wrote to them to confirm them, as *Sleidan* recordeth, lib. 3. pag. 34. neither was their former courage daunted till division fell first in among their own Ministers of the new and old City of *Prague*, and afterward among the Souldiers.

Lastly, Although we could deduce no such thing by storie, yet being here asserted to be during that time, we are to believe that it was truth, even as there were seven thousand during *Jezebels* persecution who had not bowed their knee to *Baal*, who yet possibly might be unknown to others, as to *Elias*, till the Lord revealed it to him in the general, without shewing their names or where they dwelt.

It remaineth that we should make some application of the witnesses killing and their Resurrection afterward, which according to the former grounds falleth immediately before the year 1558. in which time we will find these things to fall out.

1. Anno 1546. Began that war between the Emperour and the Duke of *Saxon*, *Landgrave* of *Hessen*, and other Protestants in *Germanie*: the year thereafter the Duke is defeated and taken prisoner; the *Landgrave* is shut up in prison, the whole face of affairs is changed, Protestant Magistrates exaundered, many hundreds of Ministers banished, and others put in prison, if they did not receive the *interim*, which with a safe conscience they could not do: so that the face of affairs was very sad, the Protestants were made a prey, their Castles demolished, a great and incredible number of Cannons, and other Armes taken from them, and they, and prisoners with them, sent out through several corners of Europe, as trophies of the Popes absolute victorie and subduing of Lutheranism: whereupon great insulting followed through the Popish world. At this time also persecution was at a great height in *France*, in the *Netherlands* under the Duke of *Alba*, and in *England*, during the reign of Queen *Marie* which began in the year 1554. It is marked by some (to wit, by *Alstedius*, *Chron. testium*) that from the year 1540. and some years after there were 900000. Christians massacred for the cause of Religion, so that the Professors of the gospel had not suffered more than they did immediately before that year 1560. having standing Laws in all Kingdoms against them, foresellours, proscriptions, banishments, death, &c. exercised for the destroying of them, and they as infamous made incapable of all privileges and dignities. We may add, that about the same time, Anno 1545. fell out the great massacre of the poor *Waldenses*, in *Provence* in *France*, the burning of *Merindol* and other Cities where they lived, and the total destroying of their Countrey by the Lord *Odeps* means: which, though it had been often formerly assayed, yet till this time could they never get it effectuated.

Beside, at this time also was the persecution by the Duke of *Savoy* in the vallies of *Piedmont*: considering therefore the great and universal persecution rising at one time and with such successe; considering also the persons upon whom it especially sealed, being either these called *Waldenses* or *Albigenses*, who being the stock of these who witnessed against Antichrist in much suffering and sackcloth whiles there were no other, may well be accounted eminently the Witnesses; considering also that this persecution sealed especially upon Ministers, who by their office are witnesses, the heat of it was against them; *Bohem*, being of these *Albigenses*, lost two hundred it alone, so that none were admitted to stay but such as by receiving that *interim* gave submission; considering also the time that this is trysted in, being immediately at the height and turn of Antichrists absolute tyrannie; and considering the great insolencie and joy expressed by the Popish world with many indignities and reproaches against the poor witnesses of Jesus Christ, which were evidenced by their solemnities and the reproaches that in write were put on all that were called Protestants, and many other wayes, as story holdeth it out: And lastly, considering the great, universal and unexpected reviving that the work of God had, and the happy condition that His Ministers attained immediately after these overthrowes and that insulting; partly, by the change which *Mauritius*, Duke of *Saxon*, made in *Germany*, with the edicts and statutes that followed thereupon, as was formerly hinted; partly, by Queen *Marie* of *England* her death, and other means trysted by God together almost at the same time throughout the Churches: I say, upon these considerations, it is not unsuitable to apply this killing of the witnesses to these persecutions; and their rising again and ascension, to the happy estate which the Church was immediately advanced to after that, and hath been since in some measure continued in, which, though it be not every way so glorious and prosperous as to be absolutely free, yet being compared with the former state thereof, may well be said to be in Heaven in respect of it, and we may warrantably conceive, that such extraordinary events trysted together would not be passed by the holy Ghost, and are not for no purpose timed so in this prophesie. Hence *Observe*,

1. Neither the sufferings of the Godly, nor the joy and insulting of the wicked are perpetual, but both have an end, and that speedily. Three dayes and an half is here the term of the wickeds joy; it is not worth the having. 2. The joy of the wicked doth ever end in more shame and confusion to them, and the low condition of the Godly hath ever the more glorious outgate to them. 3. Oftentimes the wicked are surprised when they look least for it, and God taketh opportunity from the lowest condition of His people to work their deliverance and to get Himself glory in the doing of it. 4. When God hath any singular thing to do, He will not only singularly fit persons for it, but extraordinarily or eminently call them, as it were, with a voice from Heaven to it. 5. When God mindeth the promoting of the Gospel, no enimity or opposition of enemies can mar it, though they be onlookers upon it. 6. There will be great odds between the successe and respect that Ministers will get at one time, and at another: these Preachers who were formerly in contempt, are now in credit; this floweth not from the efficacy of mens gifts, nor dexterity in manning things but from the Lords call, designing some for suffering at one time, and others or possibly the same for the active promoting of His work at another.

### Concerning the Waldenses.

HAVING made mention of the *Waldenses* from the testimonies of two Authors, it may be not

little word more concerning them; partly, because the Books may not be at hand to every one, partly because some *Jesuits*, and

and particularly *Gretserus* in his preface to *Reinerius*, imputeth (though unjustly) to *Illyrius*, that he had mutilated this Author in his edition of him : and he doth also impure many absurdities to them which we will not own, and therefore cannot claim them as witnesses : he denieth also, that these who were persecuted at *Merindol*, and the places beside were of that flock, we may therefore lay down more largely what the forecited Authors say, whose testimonies they cannot refuse. That *Gretserus*, in the fourth Tome of the *Bibliotheca Patrum*, doth insert several Writers their writings against the *Waldenses* ; to this purpose, as he saith, That the latter Hereticks may be confuted not only from new disputes, but from old writings, (and if there were not a likeness between their tenets and ours, this end by this could not be expected) amongst these are *Reinerius*, who, as he writeth himself, Chap. 3. was often upon the Inquisition of these Hereticks, *Petrus de Pelichdorf*, *Lucas Tudenfis* and some other writings, and catalogues of their errors, without the names of the Authors. In the 4. Chap. *Reinerius* hath these words that were formerly cited, so that it may be a wonder how they could be charged with heresie and so persecuted as they were. Again, Chap. 5. He draweth their errors to three heads, 1. *De blasphemis, quibus blasphemant Romanam Ecclesiam*. 2. In their errors concerning the Sacraments and Saints. 3. *Notat detestationes quibus omnes honestas & approbatas Ecclesie consuetudines detestantur*. A taste of all may be given shortly, 1. They say the Church of *Rome* is not the true Church, but *Ecclesia malignantium* ; and that it began to decline in *Sylvesters* time, when poison was powred in the Church ; they say that they were the Church, because they followed the Doctrine of Christ, of the Gospel and Apostles, both in word and deed ; that the *Roman Church* is the whore in the Revelation, and these who are in her almost none of them keepeth the Doctrine of the Gospel ; that they care not for the Pope and his statutes, but accounteth him the head of all errors ; that none ought in the Church offices to be above another, or (as the next catalogue hath it) that Pope or Bishop had no dignity above the Priest by the Word, For the second sort of errors, they overturn all Sacraments : First, they say that the additions profit not, the exorcisms and benedictions they reject ; but never reject the Sacrament it self. 2. The Sacrament of the Eucharist is denied by them, because *transubstantiatio non fit in manu indignè conscientis, sed in ore dignè lumentis* ; they reject the canon of the Mass, and repeat Christs words in any language, the other five Sacraments they expunge. The third sort of errors about the customs of the Church, are, in general, that what they read not in the Gospel they reject ; as *festum luminum, palmarum*, &c. *festum Sanctorum*, the adoration of the cross ; and use to work quietly on the feast days. All consecrations and benedictions of candles, fishes, palmes, fire, wax, *agni paschalis* and such numbered there, are derided by them ; that prayers are not of more worth in a consecrated Church than in another place ; they called Images and Pictures Idolatry, and many such like ; they reject Indulgences, Pereginations ; Soulmasses of the dead, Reliques, visiting of Sepulchers, &c. are in nothing profitable for souls but for gain to the Clergy. When he hath laid done all these, he giveth this for the reason of them, because, saith he, they deny Purgatory, saying, there are but two wayes, one of the Elect to Heaven, another of the damned to Hell, and where the tree flieth there it will ly ; and that all sin is mortal. He addeth in the close these three errors to them. 1. In that they would not swear, though some of them would do it when they were constrained. 2. That they condemned all Magistrates and Church-judicatories especially which were for gain. 3. All punishment of Malefactors. But in these we will find them calumniated : for, rash swearing, only then in common use, they abhorred ; the Magistrates

and Clergies practice of that time they condemned, but not their places ; for, still they were obedient ; and that revenge which they did condemn, seemeth to be the rigour of Church-mens persecution, otherwise it is known that themselves used defensive Arms, and were in subjection.

Chap. 7. He characterizeth them how they may be known ; by their manners, saith he, and their words : their manners are *compositi & modesti* ; they have no proud cloathing ; they abstain from merchandize for eschewing of lying, swearing and deceits, and live on the work of their hands, and therefore their Teachers work ; they multiply not riches, but are contented with necessities ; they are chaste, especially, *Leonistæ* ; temperate also, they go not to taverns and dauncings, and they restrain anger,

Their words are precise and modest ; they eschew scurrility and detraction and lightness in word, and lying and swearing ; they account *Vrè* and *Certè* to be oaths, &c. These seem not to be heretical characters ; Yet, Chap. 10. they are four ways to be punished, 1. To be excommunicated. 2. To be deposed from whatever dignity Civil or Ecclesiastick. 3. *Militari persecutione* and *manu armata*, all that they have are to be taken from them. If they turn, their goods are not to be restored except on grace. And lastly, if they have vassals, they are loosed from their obedience ; if they be under Superiours, their Superiours are to persecute them under pain of excommunication, and having their Subjects absolved from their obedience to them, and their lands are to be given to, and may be occupied by the Catholicks ; and for these he citeth many decrees of Popes : yea, the sons and the children of their favourers are not to be admitted to any office, as the decree that is at length set down there doth bear.

In the other Treatises, the same things are insisted on, that they derived their original from the Apostles, and said that the Church had begun to make defection in the days of *Sylvester* ; and, in a word, that they disclaimed the present Church of *Rome*, and said they were few that would go to Heaven, and though they mention community of goods, and impute that to them ; yet story is clear, that they had their own distinction in their possessions and riches &c.

Again, if we consider what the famous *Thuan* ( whose testimony cannot be refused, being a popish President at *Paris* of great esteem ) doth write of them in the sixth book of his histories ; we will find, first, that he deriveth these at *Merindol* and other places formerly mentioned, from the old flock of these *Waldenses* : to whom he attributeth out of old Authors ( particularly one *Peppinianus*, who was an inquisitor in them ) these tenets, 1. That the Church of *Rome* was the Babylonish whore ; because she had forsaken the Faith of Christ, that therefore the Pope and Bishops who sustained her, were not to be obeyed ; that the Monastick life was a corruption of the Church ; that the orders of their Clergy were marks of the beast mentioned in the Revelation ; that the fire of Purgatory, worshipping of Saints, Purgatory sacrifices for the dead, and such like, were inventions of the devil : to these sixth he, their certain Doctrines, some others were without ground added and imputed to them, he ( meaning *Waldes* ) left his own Country and settled in *Bohem*, where to this day, these who embrace his doctrine, are called *Picards* ; he had a companion, one *Arnoldus*, who, taking another way by *Alba Augusta*, descended towards *Toulouse* : for which cause, these that followed him were called *Albigenses*, or *Cathari* : unto whom, saith he, these in *England*, who are called *Puritans*, are answerable : he doth also shew how when *Cassaneus* minded to extirpat these at *Merindol*, *Alenius* a noble man, who was also a good man and learned, did dissuade him from it, because they were diligent worshippers of God, obedient to Magistrates, and no wayes guilty of the gross things imputed to them ; whereupon enquiry



enquiry was made in their lives, that the King might be certified of the truth thereof, which he compriseth in this sum, That these who were called *Waldenses*, 300. years before that, had gotten the possession of some barren parts which by diligence they had made fruitful, they were patient to labour, abhorring strifes, towards the poor liberal, in paying tribute to their Princes; and giving their Landlords what was due, exceeding faithful, assiduous in the worshipping of God, by Prayers and innocency of manners; again, that rarely they entered the Temples of Saints, except for their affairs of merchandize or other business they were out of their own bounds, and when they entered they did not fall down before the Images, nor offer wax candles nor any gifts to them, nor did entreat the Priest to sacrifice for them, nor did they sign their foreheads with the cross as the manner of others is; when it thundereth, they sprinkle not themselves with holy water, but direct Prayers to God; they go not for Religions sake to Peregrinations, nor discover they themselves before these Images of the cross as they go, they perform their holy things in another manner, and in the vulgar tongue: and lastly, they give no honour to the Pope nor Bishops, but do choose some of their own number for Pastors and Teachers; This is the sum of that which was sent to *Francis* the first: after this, saith he, two Commissioners were sent from them to the Parliament at *Aix*, to whom they gave a confession of their faith, agreeing almost with the Doctrine of *Luther*. This was sent to King *Francis*, who having given it to the Cardinal *Sadolet* to be examined, the said Cardinal returned this report to the King, that he ingeniously confessed that what was imputed to them beside these things, was merely done to make them odious without any just ground, as he by his enquiry had certainly found; and

that though there were shortly somethings set down in it, and other things more sharply against the Pope and Prelates, yet could he not advise to any rigid course against them: he saith also that the former Commissioners desired a hearing, and that they should not be accounted Hereticks before it was disputed and they convinced; and, saith he, though for a time this sifted the persecution, yet by the hatred of Cardinal *Turnon* and others, and by a forged calumny that the *Waldenses* had gathered 16000. men together, and were intending commotions, they procured letters from the King to proceed in the intended persecution, which *Minerius* Lord of *Pedar* (as this Author calleth him, whom *Slidan* called *Odep*) did cruelly execute in the most hainous and abominable manner that hath been heard of; which afterward the said King exceedingly repented of, leaving it in his last commands to his son *Henry* to enquire in that cruelty; which in part was done, especially on a Monk who had invented new torments for them; and although, saith he, some by the prevalency of some Courtiers, especially the *Guissans*, were kept from condign punishment before men, yet were visibly pursued by God, as this Author doth observe, pag. 122. From which we may gather, 1. the conformity betwixt their Doctrine and the truth which we do now profess. 2. How maliciously slanders are invented by Papists against these who maintain the truth, and how little weight is to be laid on their testimony in that respect. 3. That this opinion of the Churches begun defection in the days of *Constantine* is no new thing. 4. The horrible cruelty and unreasonableness of the Popish persecutions against these Innocents that are so well testified of, which can be no other thing, but the cruelty of the beast here mentioned.

## LECTURE. V.

Verf. 15. *And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

16. *And the four and twenty Elders which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces and worshipped God,*

17. *Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.*

18. *And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great, and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.*

19. *And the Temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his Temple the ark of his testament, and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.*

**T**He Lord, having cleared and confirmed his people in reference to the fifth and sixth trumpets, He now proceedeth to the blowing of the seventh, which bringeth the last great wo: for understanding of it, there are two things to be observed,

1. That it dependeth upon and immediately succeedeth unto the second wo, so that where the second wo hath its accomplishment, there this third taketh its beginning. Now, the second wo, having its end at the earthquakes shaking of some of

the Romish Dominion, the same hour when the witnesses are taken up to heaven immediately after Antichrists absolute domineering, this wo cometh quickly upon the back of that, verf. 13, 14. and so must contemporate with the breaking forth of Reformation and its establishment in the Empire: we conceive therefore Antichrists height to be the march between these two trumpets, the sixth leaving him in his last act of supremacy at the very turn, and the seventh carrying on his ruine; for, these events of the witnesses ascending to heaven, a part of

Romes falling and this seventh trumpet, are not linked together as successive one to another, but as contemporary one with another, the same hour, there being an hint given of that under the sixth trumpet, which is carried on and perfected by the seventh, to shew where the march is to be fixed. Beside the height of Antichrist and ruine, being woes of a distinct and contrary nature, it is not like that any considerable part of both should be comprehended under one trumpet which containeth but one wo; and therefore it is certain, that his dominion belongeth to the sixth, and his ruine to the seventh: we think therefore it is safest to begin the seventh at the beginning of his ruine, especially considering that by this trumpet cometh the news of the kingdoms of the earth their becoming the Lords; which consideration doth also confirm what formerly we laid down of the vials their being contemporary with the seventh trumpet, and none of them with the sixth.

2. We would observe the fitness and identity of this trumpet with the seven vials, Chap. 15, and 16. So that (as we conceive) these seven vials do more particularly in several steps declare the same events which are more generally here comprehended, which will be clear by considering, 1. The nature and titles of both: this seventh trumpet is called a *wo*, and the *last wo*; these seven vials are called *plagues*, and the *last plagues* of God; which is upon the matter, the same with the last wo. 2. They have one object and earand, and effects common to both, to wit, the executing of Gods vengeance upon Antichrist and the kingdom of the beast, the destroying of them that formerly destroyed the earth and the bringing Religion to light from under antichristian darkness. 3. The rise will be found to be at one time, the seventh trumpet beginneth immediately after Antichrists begun ruine, as is said; and (Chap. 16.) we will find the first vial to be poured on these that have the mark of the beast, whose kingdom is not yet fully overturned until the sixth; and therefore must be in strength when the first beginneth. Beside, Chap. 15. ver. 2. they succeed immediately unto the victory of the sealed number, Chap. 7. and there is, upon the matter, the same song as is here: whereof see more, Chap. 6. preface. 4. By comparing this with Chap. 15. which is as a preface to the seven vials, it will appear they are exceeding paralel, yet one and the same as the exposition of particulars going through all the parts will manifest: which ground being laid, will be of great use to understand, 1 this seventh trumpet. 2. The prophesie of these seven vials: And, 3. the intervening Prophesie, Chap. 12, 13, 14. by which the principal typical prophesies, expressed in sevens, are interrupted; which is again made up by the vials which are to be knit in the series to this seventh trumpet, the Lord here giving a little hint of the coming events, by way of preface and opening the temple, ver. 19. which formerly was shut: and what followeth upon that? Chap. 15. 6. out of the Temple, thus opened, come seven Angels having the seven last plagues, which are the particular instruments of this last wo, expressed generally under the terms of *lightnings, thunders, earthquakes*, in this Chapter. We may add, that the whole prophesies of this Book, and so that of the seven vials, is comprehended in that book which the Lion of the tribe of Judah opened, Chap. 5. And seeing, Chap. 10. the finishing of the mystery of God is applyed to the seventh trumpet, these vials then must contemporate with, and belong unto that trumpet, seeing the event that is applyed to it, is Chap. 16, 17, and 18. particularly described, and to be fulfilled by them; and if they belong not to this trumpet, it could not be said that the event fulfilled by them, to wit, the avenging of Gods people on the Antichrist and the whore and their destruction, were also fulfilled by it.

A special weight of the whole series laid down, doth lye in the confirmation of this, to wit, that the seventh trumpet and

the seven vials do contemporate and belong to the same times and events; we therefore further add, that we must either say that this trumpet doth contemporate only with the seventh vial, or with all the vials, or at least with some few of them and not with all; but neither the first nor the last, can be said: not the first, to wit, that the seventh trumpet and the seventh vial only do contemporate; because if so, then the six first vials immediately preceeding, behoved to contemporate with the six trumpets or these which preceed the seventh; but that cannot be, 1. Because the six first trumpets and the seventh are different prophesies, six of them continuing the height of the Churches enemies and her low condition, and the seventh contrarily; and all the seven vials continue matter of one kind, to wit, the Churches rising condition, and her enemies down bringing: they cannot therefore be said to contemporate with prophesies of diverse natures. 2. If the first six vials should belong to the sixth trumpet and contemporate with it, then it will follow, that the Churches lowest condition and most flourishing condition did belong to one prophesie; yea, to one step of one prophesie, to wit, one trumpet: and on the contrary, that the highest and lowest condition of the Churches enemies, to wit, Antichrist, did belong to one period; yea, to one step of the same period of the Churches condition: for, it is clear, that the Church is never lower than under the sixth trumpet, as the exposition of it doth clear, and what preceedeth in this Chapter doth confirm, and enemies were never higher, treading all under foot: on the contrary, during the first six vials, the Church beginneth to flourish, the plagues are poured out upon his kingdom and seat, and himself taken and cast in the lake by the sixth vial; but this is absurd, that such contrary events, as Antichrists height and ruine, should belong to one period; yea, to the sixth part of one period; and the like can be shewed in no other step of this prophesie wherein two such contrary events are comprehended, either amongst the seals, trumpets or vials, they cannot then be comprehended under the sixth trumpet; they must therefore all belong to the seventh. 3. These vials, as they contain matter of one kind, so are they one principal prophesie; and therefore they are no more to be divided, so as to contemporate some with the seventh trumpet and others with the sixth, than we ought to divide the trumpets to contemporate some of them with the seventh seal and others with the seals preceeding, considering that the spirit keepeth the same form in expressing this principal prophesie by seven vials, as in the former by seven seals & seven trumpets. 4. This doth confirm it also, that the contemporating of the first six vials with the sixth trumpet, would certainly lengthen it to an exceeding disproportionableness; for, Antichrists height and dominion, take up a long time; these six vials also take in a long continuance; it is safer therefore to contemporate all the vials with the seventh trumpet, and so their beginning being at one time as well as the close, their duration must be the same also. 5. This seventh trumpet bloweth immediately on the back of the second wo (which is the matter of the sixth trumpet) now, the six first vials cannot belong to the second wo: for, its called a *wo*, because of the hurt and prejudice that cometh by it to the Church. Now, these six vials that destroy Antichrist, contain a great and unspeakable benefit to the Church, and are plagues in respect of the judgement that cometh on Antichrist by them, neither could well the seventh trumpet be called the third wo, as bringing a wo with it to Antichrist and his kingdom, if to be the six first vials did preceed it (for they destroy him) they must therefore begin together.

The great reason that maketh some press for the contemporating of the first six vials with the sixth trumpet, is, that thereby they may bear out the seventh trumpet to be yet fully to come: and so (although the vials be begun) there may be the freer access to divine concerning supposed strange events of



that trumpet; but from what is formerly said (in the preceding Lecture) and what further may be said, *Chap. 20.* it appeareth that the seventh trumpet is blown already, which doth confirm the Synchronism laid down.

There are two main objections here, 1. That the seventh trumpet supponeth an absolute freedom from Antichrist and all enemies, because of these expressions, *The Lord omnipotent reigneth, the kingdoms of the earth are become the Lords, &c.* which cannot be verified during the first six vials; in the last whereof, Antichrist is high by his frogs, convening kings and Nations against the Church, &c. Therefore this seventh trumpet must contemporate with the seventh vial only. *Ans.* This argument doth proceed from the misunderstanding of the meaning of this Text: for, this doth not shew events preceeding the blowing of this trumpet, or what case the Church and world shall be in when it shall blow; but by anticipation, these phrases do express what was to follow upon the blowing thereof, and what a wonderful change might be expected by it: and this agreeth with the manner used in all the other types of this prophesie whereby the Churches estate is painted out according as by the effects typified it was to be. It doth therefore rather infer the contrary, thus, if by the founding of the seventh trumpet, Nations become the Lords, &c. then the seventh trumpet doth not follow Antichrists final overthrow, but is to carry it on, because by it Nations are to be gained from him; But the first is true from the words: Therefore it is not to be posterior to his final overthrow, but is immediately to follow that time when all Nations worship him. See further, *Chap. 6. Lett. 1.*

The second objection is, that before the seventh trumpet blow, the beasts kingdom is said to be shaken with a considerable ruine; which say some, must belong to the vials, some whereof therefore must contemporate with the sixth trumpet. *Ans.* What we have said in the exposition will abundantly clear this: in a word, the sixth trumpet hinteth the turn which the seventh doth consummate; and it sheweth, that immediately upon the back of the witnesses killing, there succeeded a glorious face of a Church in comparison of what was; which being compared with the application formerly given, will bear out this, that the Lord turned Antichrists highest fury against his Church and witnesses to be the occasion and mean of furthering his own ruine, and bringing of his Church to some footing; which we acknowledge to belong to the sixth trumpet, and maketh way for the opening of the Temple in heaven which was before shut, out of which the angels with the seven vials do proceed: which sheweth that there is some shaking of Antichrists kingdom antecedent to the vials, (as well as to the seventh trumpet) even as much as belongeth to the sixth trumpet; for, the first of them supponeth a visible Church-state, and some victory over Antichrist to be begun. From all which the contemporating of this seventh trumpet with these seven vials, doth the more evidently appear: which we have insisted the largier upon, because it is a main pillar that supporteth the series laid down, *Chap. 6.* and doth make the connexion clear here, although we professedly spoke of it before.

To come particularly to the words then; the sum and scope of these following verses, is, by anticipation, to give a little view what the vials express more fully from Antichrists begun ruine to its close: and this is brought in here for the confirmation and consolation of Gods people, that before he insist in the particular explicatory prophesie of the Churches trials from the beast in the Chapters following, they may have a hint of the happy outgate following it, and it doth lay open a full view of the Churches militant condition to her close, before he again begin to deduce it from its beginning.

This happy outgate is three ways expressed, 1. By a heavenly proclamation of good news, *ver. 15.* 2. By an excellent

song of thanksgiving, *ver. 16, 17, 18.* 3. By a type or vision, *ver. 19.* all which are but generally hinted, without mentioning any particular, because that is reserved to be done by the prophesie of the vials. The general proclamation is, *There were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the Lords, and his Christs, and he shall reign for ever:* where we have to consider, 1. the news. 2. Whence they come. The news have two branches. one is concerning the present happy change, *The kingdoms are become the Lords;* and the other is concerning the continuance thereof, *He shall reign for ever.*

By *Kingdoms of this world*, we understand not all kingdoms, but some or many; called kingdoms, in opposition to persons or families, or parts of nations. Now, the body of Kingdoms and Nations are brought in, as is expressly said, *Chap. 15. 4.* parallel to this, *All nations shall come and worship before thee.* They are called Kingdoms of this world, to shew, that such Nations as formerly did not acknowledge God should now submit to him. The scope is to shew the increase of the Gospel after Antichrists begun ruine, in opposition to the former paucity that was in the true Church.

They are said to *become the Lords and his Christs*, in opposition to what formerly they were; they were his by creation, but were not of his Church, nor did not acknowledge His Christ as Head, but owned another master; now they become the Lords by special acknowledging of him, and they become His Christs by the profession of faith in him alone. In a word, this their becoming his now, is to be a pure Church to him, such as no Nation formerly were, and as once the Jews were his in a peculiar manner. Beside, this is expounded, *Chap. 15. 4.* All Nations shall come and worship before him, by giving their professed subjection to him. It is said he shall reign for ever; this is not only to shew the perpetuity and eternity of Christs kingdom in it self, as it is expressed, *Dan. 2. That of his kingdom there shall be no end:* for, even under Antichrists height of tyranny this was true, our Lord Jesus had a kingdom then; but this reigning relateth to his visible continuing of a kingdom in the world, such as he seemed not to have immediately before this, as may be gathered from *ver. 17.* In a word, Christ hath now taken on him to have a visible kingdom in the world, and that shall continue without such an universal eclipse by Antichrist or any other, to the end.

These news are proclaimed by great voices from heaven: which may be understood either properly of the joy in heaven and praise which God getteth there for the conversion of one sinner, much more for the conversion of Nations, or, (which especially we rest in) figuratively of the visible Church which is just now constituted, and the witnesses set therein; they before this spoke silently, now, with confidence and boldness they cry and praise: the rather we conceive this to be the voice of the witnesses and faithful Ministers, because in the Song following we find only mention made of the Elders, and yet it is not like that the Ministers or beasts were silent, who (*Chap. 4. and 5.*) use in their thanksgiving to go before the Elders: this therefore is like to be from them, it being one of the delightfomest messages of the Ministers of the Gospel (*Isa. 52. 7.*) to say unto Sion, thy God reigneth. 2. The event of this trumpet is set forth in the thanksgiving Song of the four and twenty Elders: where, 1. their posture is set down; next, their praise. By *Elders* (as on *Chap. 4.* was shown) are represented the Believers, who now also having got to seats again and a visible profession (which was not heard of during Antichrists reign and the Temples measuring, and the womans being in the wilderness) they do also publickly acknowledge this mercy and praise for it, and, by falling down before him, acknowledging their having that settled condition from him; and that humility and reverence is no less requisite for praise

praise in a prosperous condition, than it is for prayer under adversity. The subject of this Song, pointeth at two particulars in the event of this trumpet. 1. Gods taking to Himself a Kingdom for His peoples good. 2. His pleading against His enemies and executing justice upon them.

In the first, *vers. 17.* they begin with Gods title, *Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come*: it was spoken of before, and is here applyed, to shew, 1. That God rightly taken-up is the ground of praise for deliverances, as well as the ground of Faith and Prayer under straits. And, 2. to shew a suitableness in Gods work to Himself, this being a proof that He was indeed God Almighty, &c. And, 3. this sheweth the right way of thanksgiving, which is to be led, in by the consideration of Gods works, to have right impressions of His own excellency, and also suitable expressions of these. This word, *we give Thee thanks*, implyeth not only the duty of a people for spiritual mercies; But, 1. It supponeth an excellency in the work. 2. A majesty in the Worker. 3. An acknowledgement of His Hand and Grace in the performing of it. 4. A reckoning of themselves obliged to Him for it. 5. A heartiness and chearfulness in the expression of this.

The first ground of their praise, is, *because thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power, and hast reigned*: which doth imply, 1. That in the time of Antichrists full domineering, the Lord seemed not to reign, having had His Power obscured by that tyranny. 2. That the Lords having a Church in the world, especially in any flourishing condition, is the great evidence of His Power and Government in the world, and a notable effect thereof; and that it ought to be exceeding refreshful to Gods people when He exerciseth His Power for having of a Church in the dayes wherein they live, that they may see Him glorified in the flourishing of His Ordinances.

The second part of their praise relateth to the work of Justice against enemies, *vers. 18.* This work of Justice is five wayes amplified and set forth, 1. In the nature and height of it, *and thy wrath is come*. God sometimes seemeth to oversee wrongs, but He hath a time of calling to a reckoning, when wrath will not be delayed, as is threatend by the Angel, *Chap. 10.* 2. It is amplified in respect of these on whom it came, *and the Nations were angry*: the world was in tops with Christs Church, having hatred against His people; even then seasonably God tryeth the vengeance, and that not on particular persons only, but on Nations. 3. The greatness of this work is set forth by the low condition of these that were to be delivered, they are called *dead*, as being appointed to death, and so accounted amongst the men of the world; which looketh to the reviving of the Prophets formerly spoken of, and to that Resurrection of the Professors, *Chap. 20.* as impossible and improbable, it being no less Power to bring the Church through that desperate-like condition she was under, than to raise the dead. The last two amplifications of this judgement are the universality and equity of it. Its universality is expressed, in that it is called *the time of judgement* wherein *small and great* shall be called to a reckoning. It is said, *the time is come*, to shew Gods appointing of times and periods even before they come, and that every event is beautiful in its season, and ought to be welcomed by Gods people in His time. The equity and justice of His proceeding is two wayes expressed, 1. His keeping promise to His own, *That thou shouldest give reward to thy Servants the Prophets, and to the Saints, and to them that fear thy name, small and great*. This recompense of Grace, is called a reward. 1. Because God hath knit it to His promise and tied Himself by Grace to the performing of it. 2. Because He accounteth Himself bound by the right He hath given them to it. 3. Because He alloweth it in lieu of the former sufferings and afflictions which they lay under: the Prophets are first named to be

recompensed, because both their work and suffering is greatest: Then *all His Saints* follow, even *small and great*; there are none who endeavour faithfully to keep their garments clean, how mean soever their parts be and obscure their place be, that shall miss of the recompense when Gods time of rewarding cometh, and this looketh particularly to the suffering Prophets, formerly mentioned, *vers. 4, 5, &c.* who are now vindicated, when God maketh it appear there is a reward for the righteous, and a God that judgeth in the earth, as, *Psal. 58.* and it is this judgement which principally is related unto. 2. It is expressed in the equity of His proceeding toward His enemies, *they destroyed, or corrupted, the earth*; here God meeteth them in their own measure: which is particularly marked in the pouring out of the vials, *Chap. 16. 5, 6.* This work of Justice doth not principally relate to the last judgement, as the scope doth clear; but to the Lords vindicating His people from Antichrists tyranny, thus expressed for the reasons given, *Chap. 6.* where His vengeance on the heathenish persecuters is set down, In sum, it is as if they had said, We thank Thee for this dispensation whereby thy wrath is manifested upon Antichrist, and Thy goodness to Thy people; and as *Moses* sang to the praise of God, *Exod. 15.* after the delivery from Egypt, so now do we for Thy deliverance from spiritual Egypt, *vers. 8.* on which consideration (*Chap. 15.*) their Song is called the Song of *Moses*, and of the Lamb also: which doth confirm the co-incidency of this trumpet with these vials.

The third way whereby this event is expressed, is, by signs, *vers. 19.* pointing at the same scope, to wit, the spreading of Reformation, increase of knowledge, and wrath against enemies. The first is expressed in two, one of them being the effect of the other, 1. *And the Temple of God was opened in Heaven*: there is no Temple properly in Heaven, *Chap. 21, 22.* but here is meant the visible Church: the allusion is to the manner under the Old Testament in times of universal corruption and defection, such as that of *Abar* was, (to whom in several things Antichrist may well be paralleled) then the Temple was shut and the Ark was not seen. Again, in the time of Reformation, such as the days of *Hezekiah* were, the first step was the opening of the Temple, *2 Chron. 29. 3.* and the people had again access to the publick service: so here in Antichrists time, the Temple is shut, the service of God is dischaunted, and in Gods secret way the Temple is measured by for a few, and the testimony is sealed up to the Disciples: now, the dayes after the witnesses reviving shall be as the days of *Hezekiah*, the Temple shall be opened and there shall be a publick, pure possession of the Gospel. The second expression, is, *And there was seen in His Temple the Ark of His testament*: the Ark was in the most holy, and the seeing of it, importeth a greater increase of knowledge. We may consider it two wayes which will agree in one, either, 1. as it was typical of Christ, so it signifieth that Jesus Christ who under Popery was obscured by superstitions, multitude of Mediators, merit of works, &c. and was scarce discernable to people, now not only is the Temple door opened, but, as it is, *Isa. 25. 6.* the vail is drawn by, and Christ Jesus the true Ark becometh discernable and visible in the efficacy of his Offices: Or, we may consider the Ark as it included the Law, therefore it is here called the *Ark of His Testament*, so it implieth, that the Word of God formerly vailed to the people, so as they durst not read it nor have it in their own tongue, Now by this reformation it is become familiar to them, they hear it in their own language, may read it in their Family, carry it about with them. The vengeance of God against enemies is set forth in these words, *and there were lightnings, voices, thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail*; expressions that are used, *Chap. 6.* when the great temporal judgment of God against heathenish persecuters is consummated; it is also mentioned, *Chap. 16.* We



take this to be the general hint of what the seven vials afterwards express, as is said: for, Chap. 15: 5, 6. immediately after the opening of the Temple, the seven Angels with the vials come forth, as being formerly kept up, now they appear.

By this similitude of opening the Temple, this is set forth, that as in the Jewish times during their greatest defections, there was still some Temple and Church, and at the time of Reformation there was no new Temple built, nor new Circumcision instituted nor Priests appointed, but corruptions were removed, and the Temple and Priests put again to their own proper use and duty: so, during the defection of Antichrist, there should still be a Church, Temple, Ordinances, and Ministers; and that the bringing of the Gospel again to publick in the world after that, should not be by erecting a new Church and new Ordinances or appointing new Officers, but should be by the purging away of the former corruptions and applying of the Ordinances and Officers to their own former use: for, it is the same Temple after Reformation which was before, but now it is opened; the woman (Chap. 12.) is the same under persecution, while she is in the wilderness during the 1260 days, that she was before her fleeing, and continueth to be the same after her return from the wilderness; only that which by Antichrist's additions was veiled and corrupted, now by their removal becometh more visible and pure. Upon this ground it is that the reviving again of Religion is commonly called Reformation, not as bringing in any thing new, but as purging what formerly was corrupted. Upon this ground Baptism continueth to be Baptism though transmitted through them, and a Ministry continueth to be a Ministry, except we say there were no Ordinances and Ministers before the time of Reformation, and so no Church which is expressly contrary to the scope and letter of this and the following Chapters. From this also it appeareth, there needeth no new constitution of a Church that is brought from Popery, such as might be called for from heathens who are not Christians, but the purging away the dross of Antichristianism, and the practical adhering to the purity and power of the Gospel, even as there was great odds amongst the Jews in the recovering of them from their grossest defection, and the admission of Pagans unto the Church.

Neither can it be inferred from this, either that then the Church of Rome was, and so is now a true Church, or that we have our ordination from it, and are beholden to Antichrist for that. This first is much urged by Papists in this dilemma, Either the Church of Rome was the true Church, and so there ought not to have been a separation from it; or she was not the true Church, and so there was none for many years, except she be acknowledged for such. To this we answer, 1. by distinguishing the Church from Antichrist and his worship brought into the Church, and added to the Ordinances thereof for obscuring the worship of Christ. There is a true Church that is the subject, that is not denied, on which Antichrist usurpeth, and as an extrinsick accident setteth himself down in that Temple, yet is the Temple and Church now different from his additions, as the Temple of the Jews was from the corruptions that were accidentally brought in upon it in the times of corruption. Thus, the word of God, Sacraments, Prayer, Ordination, &c. are continued, which are as the material worship of God, and as such, are not Antichristian. The adding of traditions to that word, putting of false glosses on it, corrupting of the Sacraments by superstitious and Idolatrous additions, praying to Saints and Images, erecting an Antichristian Hierarchy in the place of ordination, and these who should be Officers in Christs house, and many such like things, These are Antichristian indeed, and may, as we see, be separated from the former. Again, 2. we may distinguish Professors, who are either such as receive the compleat worship of the Popish Church, receiving indeed the Scriptures,

but with such traditions and glosses, as do, upon the matter, make the commands of God of none effect, that pray, but to Angels, Saints, Images, &c. that use Sacraments, but withall their superstitious and idolatrous additions, and so in all other things. Or, they are such who close with the materials (to say so) that are abused in Popery, and so abandon all these destructive additions, that is, who acknowledge the truth of the Gospel, and the way of free Grace, and hate their merit of works, satisfactions, penances, &c. who receive the Sacraments, but abominate their Transubstantiation, Mass, and all that dependeth on these, that pray to the true God in the Name of Jesus Christ, and abhor their Idolatries, &c. so in other things. Now, in the application we say, 1. That if we consider the Popish Church in the large extent thereof properly, and its worshippers or members that without choice drink in their Doctrine complexly as it is holden out by them, and worship according to these principles; in that sense, the Popish Church is no Church of Christ, but is truly Antichristian; and these two cannot stand together, to be Antichrists Church and Christs Spouse at one time: but if we consider the Church materially, as distinguished from these additions of Antichrist, in her Ministers and members, concurring in the faith of the true Doctrine, and in practice and Worship accordingly hating and abominating these superstitions, and Idolatrous corruptions and inventions; we say, that was the true Church of Christ, which did not receive these, but kept the former principles materially both in faith and practice: and therefore it will follow only on the former objection, that that Church on which Popery obtruded her self, and which yet did abhor it, that was the true Church; which we grant: but that as distinctly considered as pure from their Antichristian inventions, at least so far as Antichristian. Now, from the Church which retained the foundation, and did adhere to the Doctrine and Worship that is in the Word, we did never separate, nor from those that continued so; but did separate from the Antichristian Church that did obscure and corrupt these, and would neither amend them themselves, nor suffer others to do so: and this separation is necessary and called for by that command, *Come out of her, my people*, Chap. 18. and without this there had been no communion kept with that which was the true Church of God, who although for a time she did live in that Babylonish captivity, was yet never of that communion: and both these, to wit, that there were ever some such who kept the foundation, and did reject the Popish inventions, and that they in so far joyned not with them, and so had not fellowship with Antichrist and his works of darkness, but did reprove them, we suppose is clear from what is already said. Neither ought the Papists to think this strange, that we apply such distinctions to the Church under the true Antichrist, considering that they use the same in reference to the time of their forged Antichrist, who, say they, shall overrun the Church, and by Idolatries and violence cover the face thereof; yet shall there be a true Church who shall not be locally separated from Him and His followers, but in respect of their adhering to the former purity: and so by them the question where the true Church during that time is to be, is answered, thus, It is under Antichrist but not of that defection; His Church is the company of these that shall decline from their former purity; the true Church are the few here and there that shall retain it. And thus generally they expound the woman fleeing, Chap. 12. (which to them also belongeth to that time) to be no local mutation of the Church, but a decay of her conspicuousness and beauty, by the defection of the great part; and the overspreading of Antichristianism; and the Remiss do illustrate it thus, that as now in England the Church may be said to be fled in respect of what it was, and the publick face of things; yet, as there are in it many true professors who are not of that Church, but adhere to the Romish; So, say they,

They, will it be in Antichrists time; and may not now that same be more rationally said of the true Church even in these times and places where Popery hath covered the publick face of all.

The second objection may be cleared also from what is said, That we have not our Ministerie and Ordination from Antichrist, more than we have the Word and Sacraments from him, although through their hands the Lord did convey them to us; but we have these from the Lord, whose Ordinances they are, and to whom we are obliged for purging them from antichristian corruptions, and transmitting them pure to us, which Antichrist would never have done. Neither can it be thought strange that we should have Ordination and Ordinances transmitted to us through Antichrists reign, considering that there were such, even in his time. Now, we must either deny that any such were during that long time, which is absurd and contrary the scope here; or, we must say, that it is more impossible for us to continue ordination and ordinances in a distinct separate way from Antichrist, (as we through Gods goodnesse have them now,) and not to be obliged to him for them, or not to have them derived from him, Than it was to the Ministers and Church that lived while he was in his height. For, if we say that their Ordination and Ordinances were antichristian, then shall we have no Christian Church; if we say they were Christian, though sometimes coming through impure hands, because they separated what was antichristian from them; so that may be said here also, and so it is. We therefore apply these distinctions here, and say, that we may consider our Ordination materially in it self, or complexly in respect of its additionals, and the former Church in respect of the multitude who declined, or the few that kepted their garments, and were not antichristian. If we consider Ordination and Ordinances materially, so we have them from the true Church and Prophets that were during Antichrists reign, and our Church succeedeth them; and although it descend by the Church under Antichrist, yet is not antichristian, more than she was antichristian, as is said. Again, if we consider Ordination complexly, in which sense only it is antichristian, so we have not Ordination derived to us from her, because we have none such at all. It is not enough to make Ordination and Ordinances antichristian, that they be so, or by such transmitted, as the former instance of the Church in that time, and what is formerly said doth clear, but that they be transmitted as such complexly: Now, these are not as such transmitted to us, Therefore cannot be called antichristian.

Beside this, we may draw some conclusions from this Song, the first whereof is this, That a National Church is not only not inconsistent with the flourishing estate of the Gospel in the world, but is concomitant with it; yea, is a manifest proof of it, and a great ground of rejoycing to Gods people and of praise to Him. For clearing and confirming whereof, we may consider, 1. That by *Nations and Kingdoms* here, is meant the generality and body of such Kingdoms and Nations. 2. That by *being the Lords* here, is meant a special Church-state and relation: which two being made out, it will consequently appear that what we call a National Church (which is the combination of a Nation as one unto God) doth well suit the time of Antichrists fall, and of the Gospels flourishing.

The first, to wit, that by *Kingdoms* here, or *Nations*, Chap. 15. 4. are not to be understood some few of a Kingdom or Nation, but the generality and body of them, may appear 1. From the scope, which clearly is this, to set out the largeness of the extent of the flourishing of the Gospel, or the enlargement or wonderful extent of the Church after Antichrists begun ruine. If it were but some few, there would be no such ground of praise, nor no such difference from what was before, even then, some of Nations and Kingdoms were the Lords.

2. *Kingdoms*, becoming His, is to be understood as the like phrases used of Cities and Families, their becoming His; but that doth import, not only some of such a Family or City, but the whole or generality of them, as instances will clear. See what is said of *Lydia and Sardis*, Acts 9. 35 which certainly is more than can be said of other Cities, where yet He might have many: therefore it must be so here. 3. These Kingdoms become His as once the Kingdom and Nation of the *Jews* were His in a peculiar manner; for, this seemeth to relate to the Lords manner of calling the Jewish Nation; and as they were His, so shall these Nations be His, seeing no other so clear parallel can be given of expounding here a Kingdom becoming the Lords; so *Israel* is called *His Nation*, Isa. 51. 4. It is true, this will not hold in typical and ceremonial things, but in things common, and essential to a National Church, it will, as we may conclude the relation of a particular person to God now, by paralleling it with the particular relation between God and one of the *Jews*, though it could not be extended to what is typical & ceremonial in that respect. 4. The opposition maketh it clear, Nations now become the Lords as formerly they were Antichrists, that is, they give now the profession of purity by a publick acknowledgement as formerly they gave it to the beast; now they reject him and take Christ in his room, but the first was done nationally. 5. Nations become now the Lords as they were not His before; for, thus the opposition is to be understood also, but that was in respect of the complex body the generality of them; and if now the phrase be, such a Nation is not the Lords, because the generality and complex body do not publicly acknowledge Him, Then on the contrary, all Nations becoming his, must import His having His publick worship nationally among them. 6. Nations now are to become His, and to be admitted to the Church under the Gospel, as they were formerly secluded before Christ came in the flesh, Ps. 147. *Thou hast not dealt so with every Nation, &c.* but that which was peculiar to the *Jews* then, from which other Nations were excluded, was not in respect of particular persons of Nations; for, even many *Gentiles* were admitted with *Israel* to the Church, but the difference was in respect of the collective body of other Nations, none whereof were so admitted. 7. We may consider this phrase of Nations and Kingdoms their becoming Christs here, as it clearly respecteth the many promises and prophecies that went before of calling Nations to Him; this is marked as the fulfilling of these promises, whereby great things have been expected by the people of God, and they cannot be looked on but as holding forth more ground of joy than can be gathered from the conversion of parts of Kingdoms. Consider these two places, the first is, Rom. 10. 19. cited out of Deut. 32. 21. *I will provoke them to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish Nation will I anger you.* Where two things are observable, 1. That this provoking of *Israel* by a Nation, is somewhat penal, punishing them for their contempt, when, as it is *Matth. 21. 43.* they shall see the Kingdom of God, and their National Church-state translated from them to another people and given unto a Nation who shall nationally be invested with their privileges, as ingrafted in their room. 2. That the end thereof is to provoke them to jealousy, when they shall see a whole Nation, nationally owned of God (which they esteemed to be their peculiar privilege) and acknowledged by Him in their room; the calling of particular persons of Nations could not be so effectual either to anger or provoke them, seeing that hath been common to all times. The second place, is, Isa. 19. vers. 18, 19, 23, 24, 25. where *Egypt* and *Assyria* are called the Lords people, even as *Israel* is; and that must be nationally considered.

8. Take this place as including the re-ingraving again of the *Jews* (as no question it doth, seeing their incoming belongeth to the same time) It is most probable-like that their Church will be national in the former respect, 1. If we consider these expressions



expressions, *Rom. 11. 26.* *All Israel shall be saved*, which is certainly in opposition to the parcels of them, and singular persons whom God called, and continued in His Church, even when the body of them is broken off. 2. They may be expected to be ingrafted into that estate they fell from; for, saith He, *Rom. 11. They shall be grafted in again*, but that estate was their national Church-state-relation, and apparently had they received the Gospel, they had continued a national Church to God, and not lost their former privilege, though it had not continued to be typical, or peculiar to them. Now, this which they fell from, was not from being privileged with particular Churches; for we may see by the Epistle to the *Hebrews* and Historie of the *Asts*, that after their rejection, there were particular Churches among them. It would seem therefore that their ingrafting must be as broad as, and of the same nature with, their breaking off.

9. This phrase, *The Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lords*, is to be understood with respect to the commission given to the Apostles for calling in Nations and Kingdoms, so that this is marked as the fruit and successe of that: but that commission, *Matth. 28. Go, disciple all Nations, &c.* looketh to the body and generality of Nations, it being a warrant to invite, disciple, and gather in a whole Nation: and although sometimes in the event, but some of Kingdoms and Nations are gathered in; yet it cannot be said that upon supposition that a whole Kingdom or Nation should yeeld, but they might be by this warrant received and admitted; even as by this warrant indefinitely the call and offer is made to all the Nation in common. And although not one should yeeld, yet this commission and warrant sheweth it is neither inconsistent with the Gospel to call a Nation, nor to admit them upon the former supposition.

10. This phrase, *Kingdoms or Nations are the Lords*, must differ, and seemeth expressly to be contradistinguished from that, *Chap. 5. Thou hast redeemed us out of all Nations, Tongues, Kindreds*, and yet that will take in some of Nations distributively; this therefore must include more: and considering that this speaketh of a visible Church-state, and that of the Elect and Redeemed only, there is reason that the expression should be more broad, and apparently it relateth to that, so that as our Lord will have His Redeemed gathered out of Nations and will take none universally for such, yet to be a Church in which He will erect His Ordinances He will call Nations, collectively considered.

For the second, that by *being the Lords* here is meant a special Church-state and relation to Him by visible profession, and consequently that which we call a national Church doth belong to this time of the Gospels rising, and Antichrists fall, will be clear, if we consider these particulars, 1. that *to be the Lords* here, is not to be His as all the world is; for, so were they alway, this is some peculiar thing. Nor, 2. *to be the Lords* here, is it to be His by saving Faith, That will not agree to a whole Nation, neither to the scope, which is to shew a visible and publick Church-state and condition. It is then *to be His*, 1. by visible profession of Faith in Him, and a publick Church-relation between Christ and them, as *Israel* is often called His Nation. *Isa. 51. 4.* though all in it were not converts. Now, it is not only *Israel*, but other Nations also that are ingrafted and come in their place, *Rom. 11. 24.* Again, 2. *to be the Lords*, it is to be His as once they were not His, but Antichrists, bearing his mark, worshipping him, as *Chap. 13.* The opposition is clear; they that were under the whore are now turned to Christ. 3. They are the Lords as Families and Cities in the *Asts* are said to be His; but that is to be Churches, as the Lord speaketh to Paul at *Ephesus*, *I have much people in this place*, that is, a flourishing, numerous Church to be converted here by thy Ministry, who being gathered become a Church, *Revel 2. 1.* and so a peoples being the Lords is their becoming a Church;

and therefore when a Nation is said to be the Lords, it is equivalent as to say, that Nation is a Church to the Lord, as theie in *Ephesus* are written unto, *Rev. 2. 1.*

Out of all which may be concluded, If it be all one to say, that Nations shall be the Lords, and Nations shall be Churches, Then the Scripture doth assert national Churches in the dayes of the Gospel, not only as consistent with the Gospels administration, but as an evident commendation of it; But the first is true from this place: and therefore the last also; for, a Song is given to God for it.

There are some objections to be removed, the first whereof, is, that there is no mention made of any national Church in the New Testament; yea, where sundry Families and Churches of one Nation are converted, they are filled Churches, and not one Church; so may it be here. *Ans.* 1. It will not be safe in some things to stick literally to words, so as none other may be admitted but what is expressly in the letter if the thing be written; for, the Church being then in its infancie, it is no marvel that no whole Nations or Kingdoms were converted; and so could not be called by that name, seeing that Magistrates who are prime parts, were long after that, the Churches enemies: and though a minor part be called by Churches, and not by the name of the Nation, it is no marvel, seeing the Nation and Church were not of equal extent, and in that respect the Church was not national. *Ans.* 2. Yet the equivalent is in the New Testament, two wayes, 1. When many Churches in one City are called the Church of that City, as *Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth*, which were more than one Congregation: and may it not by the same reason be given to many Churches of a Nation as well; compare *1 Corinth. 1. 2.* with *14. 34.* it will be found that one Church had more in it. 2. It is equivalent when many Churches of one people, are, upon the matter, counted as one, and called one in the New Testament, so the *Hebrews* are all; when they are written to called one house, *Heb. 3. 6.* yet had many officers, *Heb. 13. 17.* and the visible Church only is the object of writing, and by *Peter*, one flock, *1 Pet. 5. 1, 2, 3.* and the Churches of *Galatia* are called one lump, *Chap. 5.* and written unto in common to cut off them that troubled them, and to prevent the growing of a rent amongst them: which certainly sheweth us, that Churches in one Nation have dangers common to them all, which are not so to others, and duties lying on them respectively, and rents and strivings wherewith they peculiarly are bitten and devoured. It sheweth also there was some peculiar unity to be rent, some greater tye and union that made them as one lump to be in hazard; and some ground giving them access to go unitedly about these duties (which otherwise were impossible to them) some way peculiar to them in that one Nation more than with others that were not of it. *Ans.* 3. The Scripture expressly calleth the Churches of *Judea* by one Church, which apparently was that same with the Church of *Jerusalem* and having the same Officers; for, it is not like, that all the Believers reckoned in *Jerusalem*, dwelt in the town.

But it is clear, 1. that Church which Paul persecuted was one Church, *Asts 8. 3.* but that was especially the Church of the *Jews*, not a particular Congregation of them, but all that called on Christs name, *Asts 9. 1. 2. 14.* wherever they were, all of that way, *9. 21.* especially *Jews*; wherefore he hath Letters and Authority from the high Priest which reached not to *Gentiles* (for the high Priest had not Authority over them) and he entered in Synagogues to persecute, yet that Church which he persecuted was the Churches in *Judea*, who, upon his conversion from persecution, are said immediately to have rest, *Chap. 9. 31.* compare with it, *Asts 26. 9, 10, 11, &c.* Yea from that we may argue,

The Church which Paul did persecute, was one Church, *Chap. 8. 3.* But that comprehended all the *Jews* of that way, and the Churches of all *Judea, Samaria* and *Galilee*, as

as appeareth, *vers. 1, 2, 31. Chap. 9.* Therefore they are one Church. Or thus, If the Churches of *Judea* may be one, there may be a national Church, But they are one. These who had rest by his conversion, are the same who were troubled by his persecution; for that, *Chap. 9, 31.* is mentioned as a fruit of *Paul's* conversion; But these who had rest are many Churches, and these who are persecuted are but one. *Ergo* these many, are one, and that one is many.

Take one other place, *Galat. 1.* compare *vers. 13, 22, 23, 25.* There is one Church spoken of, *vers. 13.* there are Churches of *Judea* spoken of, *vers. 22.* and yet both are one, Therefore it must mean as much as the Church of *Judea*. These Churches of *Judea* are many Churches to whom *Paul* was unknown; But these Churches were these whom *Paul* persecuted (say they) *vers. 23.* He that persecuted us, that is, Us the Churches. *Ergo* that one Church whom he persecuted, *vers. 13.* was the Church of the *Jews*, including the Churches of *Judea*.

Neither will it be offorce to say, this maketh the Church national as it was proper to the *Jews*, because for a Nation to be a Church, differeth from making the Church national, or proper and peculiar to that Nation, which was the *Jews* privilege beyond all Nations: neither is it good reasoning, persons are of such a Nation and flock, Therefore of the Church, as if it followed that seed be what they will, it may be doubted if *Israel* was so; But this is good reasoning, Such a Nation have given and ingaged themselves to Christ, Therefore they are a Church. Again, in that respect a City or Family is not more consistent with the Gospel to be a Church than a whole Nation; for, no particular City or Family have promises beyond others under the Gospel, yet any City or Family becoming Christians, becometh a Church, and all their Members are Church-members; and what more is pleaded-for, or can be denied unto Nations? Neither can it be excepted, that a Nation are many, for many Professors are promised to Christ, and is an evidence of His reign by their multitude, as their purity or holiness is another, when joyned together.

Hence also secondly, we may from the former grounds argue for the baptizing of children, thus. If whole Kingdoms and Nations may in a peculiar manner be Churches to Christ under the Gospel, and it be Christ's glory to have it so, Then are many children to be baptized; But the former is true. *Ergo, &c.* The consequence will appear by considering these two, 1. That under Nations becoming the Lords, children must be comprehended and be His also. 2. That by becoming His visibly in a Church-state and relation, there is an actual right to the Sacrament of Baptism, as a visible badge of that relation.

For the 1. we say, if Nations be Christs, Then children must be His; they are a great part of every Nation, and are included under all the former acceptions; yea, although it were but some of all sorts in a Nation, yet even in that sense children could not be excluded; no Nation will be His, if children be not His. 2. These Nations come in the room of the *Jews*, but their children were a great part of that Church. 3. Nations there take in the *Jews* re-ingrafting in what they fell from, but they and their children were broken off; Beside, if the *Jews* had not their children restored to Covenant with them, it might seem that in that respect their privileges were less by Christ's coming than formerly. 4. Nations here are to be understood in reference to the promise, *Gen. 12. In thy seed shall all Nations be blessed*: and if children cannot be secluded there, but that blessing must be understood to reach them, why should they be excluded here, or in that commission (*Matth. 28.*) to go and baptize Nations, seeing that is the promulgation of the fulfilling of the former promise and must be expounded by it? 5. When judgements are threatened on Nations, or when it is said that Nations shall be brought to judgement, it doth ever compre-

hend the children with the rest; and by what reason then can they be excluded here in this privilege?

And if this be granted, then will their Baptism be easily evinced; for, to be the Lords here, is not to be restricted to being His by Faith savingly, as is said, but looketh mainly to being His by a visible profession, discriminating them from others who are not His: and how can that be without Baptism? or is there any other discriminating seal for children? or can they be His as members of His visible Church, and neither be baptized nor have right to it?

Again, we may thus argue. If Nations be to be discipled and baptized, Then are children to be baptized, and that by virtue of that command and commission, *Matth. 28.* But the former is true, Nations are to be baptized. *Ergo.* That which needeth to be made out here, is, that under Nations, children are to be included, and that in that commission; which may be thus evinced, If under every consideration of a Nation, children are to be included, then they must be included here also: For, we cannot conceive of a Nation, as considered either collectively in *singulis generum*, or distributively, in *generibus singulorum*, But children must be considered as a prime constituent part, as may be seen in all the former acceptions of Nations that are mentioned, children are included in them all, and we say must be included in this very commission, *Go, teach all Nations, and baptize them*, 1. Because this commission respecteth particularly Gods promise to *Abraham*, *Gen. 12. 3.* that in his seed, that is, in Christ, not only the Nation of the *Jews* that should come of him should be blessed, but all Nations; and this commission is, as if the Apostles were told now that that is to be fulfilled, and the partition is taken down, as was said to *Abraham* when the Gospel was preached to him, *Galat. 3. 8.* and so as was promised then, that the blessing that was to come by Christ should not be confined to one Nation, but should be extended to many, now accordingly is it fulfilled: we must therefore expound Nations here, as it is in the first promise; but in that promise under all Nations, must be understood children: otherways we must say, that children have no right to the blessing by Christ, and that His purchase hath no influence on making any of them blessed: which is absurd. And if the blessing be derived to them by Christ, it must be derived to them as they are contained in that promise, and so as they are included under that collective expression Nation, that being the great Charter of their title: and if under that title the inward blessing be derived, why may not the external initiating seal and privilege? and certainly by this collective, it would seem that many more are to be admitted to Baptism than to the Lords Supper, there being no such warrant given in such expressions for that as for this, Children then must be included in it. 2. By this commission all Nations are to be taken in as the *Jews* were formerly, for by this the Jewish privilege is not lessened, but the partition is declared to be removed, and other Nations with them to be admitted to share of these privileges which the Jewish Nation formerly did peculiarly enjoy; But that extended to children, This therefore must also do so. 3. If by this commission one might baptize a whole Nation and enchurch them, Then must the children be so also; for, the Nation were not a baptized Nation, if children were not so; But the former hath been formerly cleared, that this doth warrant Ministers as they are called to preach to any Nation, and, upon their submission to the Gospel, to baptize them also; and although the effect followed not alway, yet upon supposition that it do, this is a warrant, as hath been said.

Lastly, If all disciples ought to be baptized, and if such who are capable to be Church-members ought to be sealed, and that by virtue of this commission, Then ought children



to be sealed: these two are knit together, *disciple them* (as the word is) and *baptize them*: and none can deny this consequence, but children of believing parents are disciples, and are capable to be Church-members. This ariseth from what hath been said, thus, If a Nation may be enchurch'd to God,

Then children are capable to be Church-members, children being a prime part of a Nation, as hath been said; But a Nation may be the Lords and a Church and Disciples to Him, Therefore may children be so also; and therefore ought to be baptized.

*Concerning the constituting of true Churches by Reformation out of such as have been corrupt.*

Thirdly, from this it followeth, that a people, or persons, renouncing the abomination of Antichrist, and accepting of, and submitting to, the Truth and Ordinances of the Gospel, doth *ipso facto* constitute them Churches of Christ or Members thereof, and is sufficient, as to essentials, to make them to be accounted so. This is clear here; for, that these Nations do become the Lords, doth say that they are Churches to Him, yet is there no other way conceivable how they become His, but that the witnesses are taken up to Heaven and publick preaching is again restored, the Temple is opened, and the Ark of the testimony is made visible: all which doth suppose a peoples quitting of Antichrists way, and betaking them to Christs, upon which they are so accounted, as is said. It is a great question to men, how they can be true Churches that have arisen as it were out of Antichrists Dominion without any accurate constituting of them as to the members thereof? Also some are ready to think all the reformed Churches to be as no Churches, because to them they and the Ordinances which they possess, have been derived from Antichrist: whereupon they are brought to look upon the World as having no Church in it, and to be put to wait and seek for some new manifestation, as we may gather from *Saltmarsh* his description of the *Seekers* smoke of the Temple. And indeed if we begin to dispute this principle, whether the reformed Churches be true Churches, there can be no guard against this: for, if they be not Churches, there are none indeed in the World; and if there be none in the World, we cannot expect that a new Church shall be begotten, except it be by some extraordinary mean, whereof yet there is no warrant, in the least, from the Word; Beside, that the Church of Christ is to endure here on earth to the end of the World, and the gates of hell is not to prevail against her. Now this is the very place where that event is foretold of constituting new Churches out of Antichrists Dominions; and therefore it cannot be unfit to enquire how this same is accomplished.

Concerning this, we premit, first, that there is a threefold way of entering or being admitted to the Church, 1. by conversion, that is, when one simply without the Church, is, by the Power of God accompanying Ordinances, made to submit to the Gospel. Of such we have many examples in the History of the *Acts* of the Apostles. A second, is, by birth-right: this is the priviledge which Church-members children have. Thirdly, There is an admission of Members for constituting of a Church, not simply of these that are without, but of corrupt Members, who pretend to be within: such was the re-establishing of the Church of *Israel* often after their defections, when indeed the people had fallen to Heathenish Idolatry, and it may be, for sundry years continued in it, yet was their re-admission to the use of Ordinances and priviledges of visible Members far otherwayes gone about than the admission of Heathens, supposing them to have renounced their Idolatry. The second of these we have nothing to do with, Therefore we lay it aside.

Secondly, We premit, that there is great odds between the manner of constituting (to say so) a Church, or a Church-member, out of a corrupt declined Church, and the constituting of a

Church or Member of such as are simply without. Neither is there such exactness to be required in the search of these particular Members, nor so many things to be performed for the accomplishing of their membership in the former case as in the latter. This is clear by considering, first, the example of the *Jews* formerly mentioned: that was a very different thing to them, to admit declined Members in respect of others that were without. Secondly, The one was under the initiating Sacrament; for, their Circumcision was never questioned, which the other cannot plead. Thirdly, There is this reason also, because God having still a visible Church as a Mother though not conspicuous, that in every time or in every place there can no Christian be conceived to be pure in essentials, but must be supposed to be of her seed.

Thirdly, In sum, we say, that for constituting a Church or persons to be true Churches, or to be true Members of Churches out of Antichrists Kingdom, there needeth no more but a publick disowning of his abominations and erecting of the Ordinances of Christ with a professed subjection thereto according to the Gospel, and that as to the essentials of a Church, this is sufficient, though it may be there may be still some defects which yet do not mar the Truth of the being of such a Church. For making out of which we offer these considerations:

The first, is, what might constitute a true Church, or a Member thereof, after defection and corruption in the Church of *Israel*, or after *Antiochus* his abominations, That may be sufficient to constitute a true Church after the defections and corruptions of Antichrist: But renouncing of former errors, erecting again of the Ordinances and professed subjection to them, was enough then. Therefore it ought to be so now. There can be no question of the *minor*, but that this was sufficient amongst the *Jews*, any who readeth the Reformation that followed the defections under *Ahaz*, *Manasseh* and others will be abundantly convinced of this. For *Hzekiah* opened the Temple which his father had shut, erected again the publick Ordinances to which the people submitted. If it be doubted if that will follow in our case, these things will confirm the consequence; first, the unity of the Church Catholick visible, they and we being one Church, It may well therefore be argued from the example of the one to the other, as what made them no Church, will make us no Church; and so what doth make them a Church, must also have that same weight with us. Secondly, The allusion to the manner of the Old Testament is so plain in this place, that it doth both confirm and illustrate this same. It doth confirm it, that it expresseth how the Kingdoms of the earth become the Lords, in the last Verse, and it saith, *The Temple of God was opened in Heaven, and there was seen in His Temple the Ark of His Testament, &c.* which words allude to that defection of *Ahaz*, 2 *Chron.* 30. where the Temple was shut, the Ark of the Testimony was not seen untill the dayes of *Hzekiah*, who opened the Temple and made the Ark in due manner to be visible and the Word to be brought to publick, whereby the face of the visible Church was recovered; and so this remarkable event, is Illustrated by this, that so the Ordinances shall be obscured amongst many Nations during Antichrists height, as the Temple

Temple was shut in *Abar* time, yet shall these clouds be blown away and light be brought forth to Nations by a publick profession of the Gospel, whereby they shall become visible Churches to the Lord. This Argument is from the very scope of the place.

Secondly, Consider if renouncing of Antichrists gross abominations and a separate adhering to the Truth of the Gospel with a subjection thereto, was enough to constitute a true Member of the visible Church, while Antichristian darkness was at its height, Then after Reformation that is sufficient to constitute a true Church or a true Member thereof; But the former is true, to wit, there was no more to constitute a true Member of the visible Church during Antichrists height. Therefore, &c. The first cannot be denied; for, what must be sufficient then, must be sufficient now, seeing it is still this same Church, this same Woman, and the same Door of entering: and to deny this, would say that Christs visible Church during that time was not constitute rightly as to her essentials; and so, upon the matter, was none at all. Neither can the second proposition be denied; for, the Woman, the Church, but fleeth from his abomination, and *de facto* what more can be alleadged during that time? Beside, this is certain, that any born and bred in Popery who did afterward receive the Gospel and renounce these former errors, Such were to be accounted Members of the visible Church of Christ, and not of Antichrist.

Thirdly, Consider, such Nations and Churches as having renounced Antichrist in profession, and having submitted to the Gospel, must either be Churches of Christ, or they must belong to Antichrist, or to be accounted without as Heathens; But neither of these last two can be said. *Ergo, &c.* To say that they are fit matter or materials for building of a Church, will not satisfy: for, 1. the Scripture doth not speak of fit materials among baptized persons, so as to contradistinguish them from the visible Church. 2. This prophesie saith, that such as in this manner separate from Antichrist, shall not only be fit materials to make a Church to the Lord, but they shall be His Churches *de facto*. 3. If they have had Ordinances and Officers for many years, and have begotten children to the Lord by them, Then there must be more than matter of a Church; for, these are the privileges and blessings wherewith His true Church is privileged; and none can bring forth seed to Him

but she. And, 4. if these Churches be but matter, and that as contradistinct from Churches, Then it will at once strike at all the Churches of Christ these many years, and put us to joyn with the *Seekers* in their hopeless expectation of a new Church.

Fourthly, Consider, that all Nations and Persons so reforming after that defection, do actually become Members of the visible Church, which formerly was more latent: for, they become one in hating the whore, one in acknowledging the Truth, one in submitting to the same Ordinances. And therefore what reason can there be to account them no Churches, seeing she by these characters hath been justly accounted the Church of Christ?

Fifthly, The consideration of this prophesie to be fulfilled in the Reformation that hath been these hundred years past, will strongly conclude, that these reformed Churches must be true Churches, though it may be that several of them be in many things defective; for, if by this prophesie it be clear, that the event that followeth Antichrists height must constitute true Churches and a Kingdom to Christ after a more conspicuous and visible manner than formerly; and if it be true, that this Reformation which hath come unto the world in the generation last past, is the very fulfilling of this prophesie, and the very event foretold here, Then it cannot but follow that this Reformation must be acknowledged to have brought true visible Churches unto the world: otherways the Truth of this prophesie will be put in question. Now we suppose, that by what hath been said of this in the former *Lectures*, that both the former will be seen to be true. Therefore this must necessarily follow: for, this Reformation is either what is prophesied of here, or it is some other thing; But it can be applicable to no other thing. And if it can be applicable to no other thing, Then these great events must be understood to carry alongst with them the visible Kingdom of Christ; and the event must be answerable to what is foretold: and if it were not so, there were no such ground of a Song as is here insisted upon. This Argument from the event of a prophesie being fulfilled, even as the *Jews* that lived under the second Temple were to account that dispensation to be the fulfilling of the many prophesies that went before, although many were not fully satisfied in their expectation; and, no question, several things were defective though the essentials were there.

## LECTURE. I.

### CHAP. XII.

Verf. 1. **A**ND there appeared a great wonder in Heaven, a woman clothed with the Sun, and the Moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve Stars:

2. And she being with child, cried, travelling in birth, and pained to be delivered.

3. And there appeared another wonder in heaven, and behold, a great red Dragon, having seven heads, and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

4. And his tail drew the third part of the Stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the Dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

5. And she brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God and to his throne.

T t

6. And



6. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore dayes.



He seventh trumpet in the former Chap. gave a little touch of the events that are to be expected by it; now, before he come particularly to insist on them, in these three Ch. 12, 13, and 14, the first explicatory vision, contemporary with what went before, is wisely and seasonably inserted, and he returneth then to the third principal vision in the seven vials, Ch. 15. & 16.

Before we speak particularly to the words, we shall lay down some general observations conducing to the clearing of this vision and the scope thereof, and more particularly of this Chapter.

1. The principal matter handled in this vision, is not different from, or belonging to any other time, but in the matter for substance, and in the time it doth agree with the former prophecies of the seals and trumpets. It is added now, and not before, for explication of somethings in them, because the threed and series of the story is deduced in a little view from Christs days to the end of the world, and it is less violent now to begin, than if between the seals and trumpets some part of this had been inserted. Beside, neither would the matter have been so clear, if it had been divided: neither is it less consistent with the series of the prophesie to interpose something for clearing by-past visions here, than it was to insert something for clearing what was coming, Chap. 7. That it treateth, I say, of the same things and belongeth to the same time, appeareth; for, the matter of this belongeth either to heathenish persecution and the Churches travelling, or to Antichrist, the beast, mentioned, Chap. 11. in his rise, reign, and begun ruine: all which, are the very matter of the former prophecies. And the rise and close of this vision will be found contemporary with the former two visions, therefore it must belong to the same time.

2. Observe, That in this vision the principal scope is to point out Antichrist in these chief periods of his *rise, reign and ruine*, but especially the former two: wherefore these are most insisted on as the scope of the whole Book, and almost all the explicatory prophecies, as this here, and that other, Chap. 17. 18. 19. are spent upon that; God thereby minding to rid marches between his Spouse and the whore, therefore other events are less touched, and not so to be pursued in the exposition.

3. If it be questioned, why these things are repeated? *Answer*. It is not unusual for propheticall visions to be so delivered, as in *Pharaohs dreams*, Gen. 41. 23. and *Daniels visions*, and *Josephs dreams*, and there are two reasons of it, 1. for confirmation of the truth of the thing, as *Joseph* saith to *Pharaoh*, ver. 32.

2. For further explication and clearing the same thing; both which agree well here.

4. The reason of the inserting of the explication here, would also be observed; 1. That it cometh in well on the back of the 11. Chapter, where two things were shortly hinted,

1. Concerning the beast which was to destroy the witnesses. And, 2. their persecution and prophesie, 1260. dayes: both which were but named there; here they are much cleared in their forerunners and other circumstances. 2. It is seasonably premittid to the vision of the seven vials, which bringeth the overthrow of the beast, which certainly could not be well understood, did not this express description of the beast precede. 3. It insinuateth, that now, at the seventh trumpets blowing, this prophesie that concerneth Antichrist will become more clear to the Church in that time, wherefore it is subjoyned here as also to give together a general view of the Church, and of the beast in two distinct representations, the one more general, which is past; the other more particular, which followeth.

5. The altering of the manner of expressing this vision,

which differeth from the two visions that go before, and that which followeth in the seven vials, is not to be passed. It is expressly done, not only for clearing of that which in other types is expressed, but that also the series of *seals, trumpets, and vials* may be kept unconfounded. Therefore here when he breaketh off the series which he had formerly continued, he doth change his ordinary way of expressing by *sevens* and *types* of that kind, till he come again to take up the series where he left, which is done by the vials, Chap. 15. and 16. where he doth again proceed as formerly he had done, till he carry the matter to the end; and then altereth again, Chap. 17, 18, &c. when he explicateth that vision of vials, as he had done in this.

For understanding of this Chapter, *Observe*, 1. That it setteth forth the Churches first trials from the beginning till Antichrists publick appearing, and so contemporateth with the prophesie of the seals, and the first four trumpets; and therefore it is to be divided again in two main battels of the Church, suitably to the matter and time thereof, as will after appear.

*Observe*, 2. That which is spoken of the Dragons watching the woman and the childe, ver. 4. and his war, ver. 7. and the womans flight, ver. 6. which is again repeated, ver. 14. doth not point out two severall battels of the Church, but the same one trial and event; which is, First, summarily and by anticipation set down, and thereafter more particularly resumed and described; so that that war of the Dragons with *Michael*, is the same with his watching of the woman, and his seeking to destroy the man-child; and that flight, ver. 6. is that same with what is set down, ver. 14. otherwise it would be inextricably difficult to shew two successive flights of the same continuance, how she returned, or when, and how she did flee, ver. 6. when yet wings are but given her, ver. 14, &c. these are all obviated by saying that what is but shortly and in the general hinted at first, is afterward more fully explicated: and considering the time of the continuance of both, and other circumstances, it doth make this unquestionable, as the exposition will clear.

3. Concerning the scope of the first part of the Chapter, which is to ver. 13. we are to *Observe*, That it is to shew the first sufferings of the Christian Church, and the devils seeking to destroy her seed, which is *CHRIST* mystical, with her deliverance therefrom; and we are not to understand it of Christ personal his being brought into the world, and the persecutions that followed him, and that neither considered as having *Mary* for his natural Mother, or the Church of the *Jews* for his Mystical; neither of which can be understood here by the woman thus described, as he personally considered is not to be understood by the child: For, 1. that which is here, is propheticall and revealing some new thing to come to the Church. Now both these applications were before this time already passed, and plainly and historically set down in the Gospel; and therefore it is not to be thought that these are here again under such dark expressions repeated. 2. This war is of the same parties, and to the same scope, with that which followeth, to wit, the devils casting of a stone out of his mouth, &c. The woman here and there is one and considered as such: and seeing these events afterward mentioned, and what is spoken of the woman her flying to the wilderness, &c. can neither be applied to *Mary*, nor to the Church of the *Jews*; but must be applied to the Gospel-Church and her troubles, that contemporate with Antichrists Dominion that falleth within the same time, therefore this first part must be understood of the same Church; and her trials which precede that time.

Beside

Beside that this glorious description, holding forth a Church in opposition to the former Jewish typical ceremonies, cannot well be otherwise applied to any of the other two. 3. This child here is not to be understood of Christ personally, because they are expressly said to be *brethren*, ver. 10. and such as *overcome by the blood of the Lamb*, ver. 11. and the *womans seed that have the testimony of Jesus*, verse 17. and so are expressly distinguished from Jesus the Lamb, and from *Michael*, ver. 7. who is their Captain. Beside, the bringing forth of this man-child hath outward peace following thereupon in the Church, which Christs birth had not. Therefore the many declamations concerning the blessed Virgin *Mary*, which are heaped up by some Popish Writers upon this place, are most impertinent, groundless and ridiculous. Yet, 4. this description of the Churches infancy is set down with special allusion to the manner of our Lord Jesus Christ the Head His coming into the world, 1. as He was a child, born of a woman in many outward wants; so are His People brought forth in many straits. 2. As *Herod* watched to destroy Him, as soon as He was born; so doth the devil by other persecuting instruments watch the Church to crush her seed, immediately after their birth, as it were, and in their very infancy, even as *Pharaoh* sought to destroy the *Jews* male children, *Exod. 1. 23.* 3. As Christ was born, and preserved till He had finished the work committed to Him, notwithstanding of all the enemies malice and craft; so shall it be with the Churches seed. 4. As He immediately after His birth, was pursued, made to flee, and carried to *Egypt*; so shall it be with the Gospel-church, who should be made to flee immediately after the first delivery. This allusion is the more probable, if we consider that the time of Christs being in *Egypt* will be found to be about three years and an half: (which is here the time of the Churches wilderness-condition) for He was born in the thirty year of *Herods* reign; He did not flee immediately, as appeareth by *Maries* continuing till her purification, *Luke 2.* and by *Herods* killing the young children of about two years old, *Matt. 2.* and He returned from *Egypt* immediately after *Herods* death, who reigned full thirty four years, whereby the suitableness of this time may be gathered: and lastly, as *Herod* vented his malice upon the Children of *Bethlehem*, where Christ was born, after His escape; so doth the devil here vent his malice upon the Churches seed after her deliverance.

We come to speak of the first part of the Chapter, which containeth the Churches first war with the Dragon (not but the Dragon fighteth also under Antichrist, but more covertly and in another shape, here more palpably) which is first summarily proposed to *vers. 7.* Then, 2. prosecuted more particularly.

*Vers. 1.* In this first part, the parties are described, 1. The defender is set out in three things, 1. She is a *woman*, that is, the Church, as she is ordinarily called; partly, 1. for infirmity, and being obnoxious to wrongs. 2. As in subordination to Christ as her Husband. 3. As the Mother of Believers; and she is one *Woman*, (though here the whole Gospel-church be represented) to shew an unity in the Catholick visible Church, which is the only object of persecution; and that she is but one Church, Woman, Mother or Wife: and there cannot be more.

2. She is described by her adorning or stateliness, in three things, 1. She is clothed with the *Sun*, setting out the pure Doctrine that she professed and the shining conversation of Believers in that primitive time, who had put on the Lord, *Rom. 13.* and owned His Word and Testimony, which is called the *Sun* in the eight Chapter, especially what concerned His imputed righteousness and satisfaction. 2. The *Moon* is under her feet: whether by the *Moon* here we understand earthly temporal things, which are mutable and spotted like the Moon; or Jewish feasts, new Moons, &c. called the rudiments of the world, *Col. 2.* it cometh to one, to wit, to set out the denieness and mortifiedness of the Church at that time, despising worldly things

and adhering to Christ, and having a conversation heavenly, which the Apostle exhorteth unto, *Col. 3. 1.* in opposition directly to the resting on these new Moons and other elements of the world, as well as is in opposition to worldly things. 3. She hath a crown of twelve Stars, that is, faithful Ministers carrying the Doctrine of the twelve Apostles and following it; so the Church is builded upon that, *Eph. 2. 20, 22.* and *Rev. 21. 14.* the names of the Lambs twelve Apostles are written on the twelve foundations: this is a *Crown*, that is, it is her glory and credit to have faithful Ministers, and to be following and avowing their Doctrine, as *Paul* calleth the *Thessalonians* his Crown. This is a well-adorned Church in a suffering time: We take these three more particularly to be expressed, *ver. 11.* The first, by the *blood of the Lamb*, that is, the *Garment*. The second, the word of the *Testimony*, that is, the *Crown*. Thirdly, They cared not for their lives, and loved them not unto death, that is, the trampling of the Moon under their feet, or undervaluing temporal things; for, the life is most cared for, as *Job 2. Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.*

The third part of the description, is, *ver. 2.* in her *travailing and crying*, expressing two things, 1. A fruitful condition of the Church in this beauty; so *travailing* and bringing forth doth signify in Scripture, and is well applied to the Gospel-church, which is a Mother, *Isa. 54. 1.* *Gal. 4. 19.* with 26, 27. 2. And although it doth signify a fruitful condition, yet also it is a sorrowful and afflicted condition, as ye know the *travailing* of a woman ordinarily holdeth forth, and Christ calleth it (*Job. 16. 21.*) *sorrow*, or pain till the child be brought forth. In a word, this primitive Church is pure, fruitful and afflicted, as her crying importeth: with great pains do Ministers beget, *Gal. 4. 19.* and with great hazard is the profession of Christianity owned, and great wrestling hath she in Prayer to God and sufferings from men, to be rid of this sorrowful condition, ere she get free of it.

The enemy pursuing, is described *ver. 3.* and 4. in four or five particulars; and it is called, as the former, a *great sign* or *wonder*, represented to *John* in Heaven, because great things were signified by these; here the parties are exceeding unequal, she a woman, the enemy is a Dragon: some say there is an utter antipathy between Men and Dragons, whereas other ravenous creatures for meat destroy men, these for delight do it, and whereas men can endure to look on other creatures, yet not so well on the Dragons and Serpents; however, it is a most ravenous beast, by which is represented, in Scripture, sometimes the devil, sometimes some great persecutor acted by the devil the supreme commander, so was *Pharaoh* called; and as he was the first oppressor of the Jewish Church, so this representeth the first oppressors of the Christian Church; both come in here, the devil first, that is clear, *vers. 9.* then the *Roman Empire* primarily instrumental in persecuting Christians, that appeareth by the description of the Dragons shape, he hath *seven heads and ten horns*; which *seven heads* (*Chap. 17.*) are clearly to be expounded seven Hills, and seven Kings, or sorts of Governments: and these *ten horns* to be *ten Kings*, which were to arise out of the ruins of the Empire; (they had not then received power, *Chap. 17.* Therefore they have not here Crowns, as *Chap. 13.*) and expressly she is (*v. 18.* of that Chapter) called the *City which reigned over the Kings of the earth*, at that time, the devil is chief, and the *Roman Empire* or Emperour his Depute in this: for, the Devil acteth not immediately, yet what he doth by instruments, is attributed to him, as *Chap. 2. 10.* This is a *great Dragon*, to shew his power; *Red*, to express his cruelty; and *having seven heads and ten horns*, to express him who especially is instrumental in exercising that cruelty, the *Roman Emperour*, like *Pharaoh*, who is called a Dragon, *Psal. 74. 15.* *Isai. 27. 1.* *Ezek. 29. 3.*

*Vers. 4.* His carriage is set out in two things, 1. He hath a *tail*, that is, power, and flatteries to persuade with temporal allurements; and by these two he prevaileth to draw



Ministers and others, who ought to be lights, from their heavenly posture, to an earthly subjection. This alludeth also to *Dan. 8. 10.* where the casting down of the Saints is expressed so. 2. His other practice, is, to wait for the child to devour it: in a word, he leaveth no mean unassayed to destroy all professing Christians that bear Christs name, and to keep them that they should never win to any out-gate or comfortable condition, as *Pharaoh* did to the children of *Israel*, and *Herod* to Christ, seeking to destroy them immediately at their birth, so that none should sooner be a professed Christian, but he was liable to the hazard of the Dragons Laws. This now is an unequal encounter; yet, behold, the event is happy, the child is born and kept safe, and the woman fleeth: how this came to pass, that a weak woman and a child, are kepted from a watching cruel Dragon, is afterward cleared, to wit, by *Michaels* fighting and taking her part.

*Vers. 5.* The event hath three steps, 1. The womans delivery and the childs description. 2. The childs exaltation. 3. The womans fleeing, *vers. 6.* By this delivery, in general is set out not only her bringing forth of Believers or Professors, but such a delivery as one bringing forth a man-child is said to have, *John 6. 21.* a comfortable delivery, and which, in place of crying, giveth her a Song afterward, as *vers. 10.* for, she had children before, but had not her pains taken from her, and was not at freedom to bring forth without the enemies watching. The child is described most for her comfort, and with respect to our Lord Jesus Christ. It is mystical Christ, *1 Cor. 12. vers. 12.* who in His Members is brought to a flourishing condition, and His Church set at liberty from persecution, and some of her sons exalted to Heaven to an honourable condition, from which *Lucifer* is said to fall, *Isai. 14. vers. 12.* This shortly is fulfilled, when after Heathenish persecution for three hundred years had prevailed, Christians were advanced, *Constantine* being made Emperour, and Christianity was established by a Law. That thus the delivery, Child, and Heaven to which he is taken, are to be understood, will appear in these, 1. This is the delivery which is the ground and subject of this Song, *vers. 10.* Now is Salvation and the Kingdom of our God, &c. that is, a full evidence of Gods reigning, delivering them from these persecutions and giving them liberty, But that is this delivery. 2. Such is the childs taking to Heaven, as is the Devils casting from Heaven, for these are opposed, But that is the spoiling of him of the Authority of the Emperours which he abused before; now he hath not the Throne, as in the Church of *Pergamos*, *Chap. 2. vers. 13.* but Laws and Authority are for Christians. 3. It is as the witnesses were taken to Heaven, *Chap. 11. 12.* that was by a publick authorized Church-condition and state after Antichrists persecution; so here, Religion authoritatively is established, which never was before: and Christians countenanced after Heathen persecution is over; and seeing it is usual to the Scripture to call Magistrates gods, it is not unsuitable to express their station and state above others by Heaven.

The property of the male child, His ruling, &c. we shew how it is to be understood (*Chap. 2. 27.*) of Christ in His Members, and it may be, here to shew the great Dominion that our Lord Jesus should have in the World in *Constantines* time, when His Members should be exalted to a honourable condition, called (*vers. 10.*) the Kingdom of our God and the Power of His Christ, in opposition to the usurpation of Satan in the seven headed-beast before, and as was, *Chap. 11. 15.* in opposition to Antichrists Dominion: for, when the Church is up, Christ exerciseth and manifesteth His Power in them; so by this child, is not meant Christ personally, but such as kept His Testimony, *vers. 11.* and ult. Nor particularly *Constantine*, but Christ mystical, whereof *Constantine* was but a Member; and that outward Govern-

ment of his but a little shadow, type, evidence, and effect of this great Dominion of the Lords, and made use of by God to be the external mean and cause of His Churches peace. However, this sheweth the case to be exceeding joyful and different from what it was, which, being before the Churches flight to the wilderness, can be applied to no other time but that delivery aforesaid from under heathenish persecution; and she being brought now to a glorious settled and quiet condition, like a Heaven in comparison of the former.

The last part of the event, the womans flight is set down, *vers. 6.* by way of anticipation, as is clear, the place of it being properly *vers. 14.* It is so soon subjoyned, for these reasons, 1. To let see how soon on strait is on the back of another to the Church; and specially, to shew that Antichrists rise and the Churches decay in their beginning are contemporary with the out-gate from the former tryals, and is (as it were) marked as a consequent of the former delivery: for then, (as *Platina* writeth of a voice) was poison sown in the Church, and prosperity, being abused to pride, sooner defaced the Church than persecution. 3. It is subjoyned to give a little view of the case of mother and child together, that the children of the Church readily are no sooner promoted, but she is in a wilderness-condition, as it were, decaying and declining much from that beauty and pure glory and visibility she was in to before; a sad thing that the childrens prosperity often banisheth the mother, and obscureth her beauty; seldom hath greatness, and temporal prosperity, zeal and self-denying singleness dwelt long together; and it is the last, and not the first, wherein her native beauty doth consist.

This consideration of this Verse we leave till *vers. 14.* Only now by fleeing we are not to understand a local mutation of this Church from one place to another, but from this forth a decay of the former beauty of it, that whereas therewas in *Rome*, and other places, glorious Churches before, and the Bishops were Martyrs, as all in *Rome* were before *Sylvester* and *Constantines* time: now that is by degrees veiled by pride, pomp, hypocrisy, Heathenish and Antichristian dressings, that the few that remained the true Church, are (as it were) *Chap. 11. vers. 1.* closed up in a secret corner of the Temple, while the multitude possessed the Court; that, to wit, the Temple is called the place prepared of God, and there is she fed by the witnesses with the true Word of God, while the World are swollen with pride, traditions and superstitious inventions. And so the Prophets prophesying, and the Churches staying in the wilderness to be fed, are of equal duration, 1260. dayes: which Verse being so near subjoyned to the former, giveth a clear hint at the sum of the second state of the Church, to wit, that which was latent, and when it beginneth, even when the other endeth.

Two things remain to be cleared, 1. Why this beast here under the Dragon hath the Crowns on his heads, and on his horns, and that beast (*Chap. 13. vers. 1.*) hath the Crowns on his horns, not on the heads. The reason is, because when the Roman Empire was heathen, and under that notion persecuted the Church, the seat of the beast, *Rome*, had the royal imperial dignity; and these ten Kingdoms were then Provinces subject to her, as appeareth, *Chap. 17.* These ten then were but to get royal independent dignity, but when the Empire turned slaves to Antichrist, about the year 606. and after, the case is altered; *Rome* is denuded of the Royal Authority which she had, and these Provinces are now by the Empires decay turned to be Kingdoms, though in this condition depending still on Antichrist, as formerly they were united under the Dragon. 2. Why doth the Dragon now but pursue the womans seed, and after, in the second onset, he setteth on the woman the mother

mother to drown her. *Ans.* In these three wars of the dragon ye will find a difference, 1. He seeketh to destroy all the seed. 2. He sendeth out a flood against the mother, and his anger is turned against her when the child escapeth. 3. When the woman escapeth, (though she cede, which the child did not, which maketh it appear that this flying rather holdeth out a change upon the Churches qualifications, than of her local residence) then *ver. ult.*) he setteth himself not against the mother simply, nor against all the seed indifferently, as in the first; but against such as keeped the Commandments of God. The reasons are, 1. Because open persecutors look to all sorts of professors indifferently, and do vent cruelty on them. Hence *Arians* would sometimes be put to suffer with *Orthodox* Christians; and by *Arians* the *Novatians* as well as others; they know not to make difference, they so hated the very name. 2. Because the heathen persecutors thought that the readiest way of destroying the Church, was, to destroy her members in whom she subsisted, and that they being undone, consequently so would she be. Therefore, 1. The devil beginneth with murdering bodies to undo the Church in her members; and when that faileth, he setteth on the mother to poison the members or children by corrupting her, as one, intending the destruction of a child, would poison the Nurse. This is done not by direct hatred at the name and profession of Christianity now in request, but by counterfeiting and corrupting Christianity, that he may once alter the face, beauty and wholsomeness of the Ordinances of the Church, which is the Mother, and

he is sure the children which suck these breasts will not be lively. To effectuate this, he maketh use not of open heathens, but corrupt Teachers that he speweth out, not to taint this or that person but the fountains, as was seen in the first four trumpets, in which he spareth particular children of the Church, possibly alluring them with rich benefits, sumptuous buildings, honours and preferments; but in the mean while carrying on his design against the Church as a Church, even under and by these, which by the former voice in *Sylvesters* time (if it be truth) is hinted at, and that word of *Jeroms* in *vita Malchi*, when Emperours became Christians, the Church indeed increased in worldly pompe, but decreased in spiritual beauty; *Ecclesiam Christianam, postquam ad Christianos venit principatus, potentia quidem & divitiis majorem esse factam, sed virtutibus minorem.*

Lastly, in the third battel, he putteth at some of the seed only, because here he maketh use of Antichrist a counterfeit enemy, who will not purposely and down-right set on all Christians, as such; for, his quarrel, and the devils, is but with these that are faithful and hate his pride and hypocrisie. 2. In this last, he joyneth violence and deceit together, and by deceit he overcometh many, they have drunken up the flood, but these that will not drink of these fornications, he pursueth them with violence by the following beast, and not all Christians simply, but these who kept themselves from these growing corruptions; and these are called the womans seed.

## LECTURE II.

Ver. 7. *And there was war in heaven, Michael and his Angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels:*

8. *And prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven.*

9. *And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*

10. *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.*

11. *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death.*

12. *Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them; wo to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea: for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*

**H**AVING given a little touch of the Churches first battel and the event thereof, untill her flying to the wilderness, he returneth, from this 7. *ver.* unto the 13. more fully to explicate that war, that the strangeness of the event of a womans victory and her child against a Dragon may appear not to be from her strength, but from a good Captain who fideth with her, and fighteth for her. The story is resumed in these words, *There was war in heaven:* By *heaven* we understand the Church; not as if one part of it were divided against the other, but that the Church was the seat, and object of it, the devil

invading her by open proclaimed war against all Christians. He overrunneth her by Massacres and persecutions, as invaders overrun invaded kingdoms. She again, by *Michael* and her members resisteth that fury, so the war is here. By *war* we understand not secret enmity, as alwayes there is, nor peculiar incursions, such as come now and then by starts, as in *Julian* his time and some others, but open professed and avowed universal war, such as the heathnish persecutors maintain'd both in their decrees and in the execution of them for 300. years, such war as professedly the Church did not meet with since.

The parties are more insisted on than formerly, 1. In their leaders



leaders. 2. In their followers or souldiers. *Michael* is general on the womans side; we take it to be Christ, who is Commander and Leader, *Isa. 55. 4.* and Captain, *Heb. 2.* It is like as is also intended, *Dan. 12.* to which this alludeth. His souldiers are both his *Angels*, properly taken, (for *Heb. 1.* they are *ministering spirits for the good of the heirs of salvation*, and are so at our Lord Jesus his command,) and also His members in the Church Militant, especially his Ministers who did fight on *Michaels side*: for *vers. 11.* they are such who overcome by the *Lambs blood*, their own sufferings and His word, which agreeth not to *Angels* properly so called: Thus Christ and his followers make one side; for, all the Armies in heaven follow him, *Rev. 19.* On the other side are the *Dragon* and his *Angels*, he wanteth not such as take orders from him. We understand here also not only spirits, but wicked men, Emperours, Judges, Souldiers, &c. who are afterward said to be with him cast out of Authority and respect; this is in allusion to the devils casting out of heaven. Here is insinuated some order amongst the devils, whereof there are many legions to prosecute their design: and though all be spirits and devils, yet may there be amongst them an order, some higher, some lower; some leading, others giving obedience, all concurring for supporting their work and Kingdom of darknesse, without which Christ saith their Kingdom would not stand; which order (if it may be called so) may stand till the last Judgement when there shall be no more work for devils of this kind, and, it may be, continue in some respect, as it serveth to promote Gods design of punishing the reprobates, in which they are (some way) Gods executioners.

If any ask how these parties so different did fight? *Answ.* The *Dragon* their pursuer he fought, 1. by edicts, condemning and inhibiting Christianity. 2. By violence, fire, sword, and all sorts of tortures, pursuing them that professed it. 3. By degrading them from places of respect, spoiling them of their goods, banishing them and leaving them obnoxious to all wrong and injustice without protection. 4. By cruel calumnies, lies and aspersions made and put upon Christians and on their meetings and Religion, as the most vile creatures for adulteries, gluttonies, seditions, &c. as may be seen in the Apologies written for Christians defence, and many other wayes he pursueth his old enmity.

*Michael* again and his *Angels* fought, 1. by the clear and powerful preaching of the Gospel, that two edged sword that goeth out of his mouth, whereby Satans Kingdom was exceedingly shaken. 2. By publick Apologies and defences written for Christianity and Christians, by *Aristides Quadratus, Justine Martyr, Tertullian, Cyprian, Melito, &c.* whereby the enmity of many Emperours and hot persecution was somewhat abated; as is to be seen in the third seal. 3. By patient and chearful suffering, *vers. 11.* thereby giving a great defeat to him, when God furnished His servants, so that on-lookers would be forced to yeeld to that way. 4. They fought by their prayers, whereby notable effects for help were obtained; and by their holy conversations, whereby the enemies were often convinced of their innocency: and beside these, *Michael* he fought by filling their hands with other wars, sometime stirring up some within, sometime some without that diverted them, as the *Philistines* did *Saul* from *David*; sometime *Michael* fought also by visible terrours, when *Aurelianus* had subscribed the decree, by a terrible thunder he was so stricken with terrour as presently to revoke it, and stay the persecucion ere it began; he fought evidently also by taking vengeance almost on all the bloody persecuters, as *Nero, Domitian, Dioclesian, &c.* At last also by raising and stirring up Christian Emperours, and so putting Arms in Christians hands whereby they were employed by him to execute vengeance on heathen worshippers and their gods, as in *Constantine's* time, where this first battel was ended, and the childe taken up to heaven.

Thus have we heard the battel in its parties, now see it further explained in its event; which is set forth, 1. By narration, *vers. 8.* and 9. 2. By way of song and congratulation, *vers. 10, 11, and 12.*

The narration is in more dark and figurative expressions, the song or poetical congratulation is more plain; for, praise ought to be clear, and the songs in this Book help much to the understanding of it, Therefore by it we are to expound the former.

The narration of the event aimeth at one thing, to wit, to set out *Michaels* victory, which was hinted at, *vers. 5.* and the devils defeat, which is more expressly named and insisted on here in four steps, First, The *Dragon prevailed not*; more is implied, that is, not only he gained not ground, but he was also alwayes the further behind, and so will all be that have *Michael* for their party; and so will all the Churches trials end in her advantage and victory; for so speaketh the first indication of this war, *Gen. 3.* betwixt two seeds. This is a sure side to fight on.

The second is, *neither was their place found any more in heaven; their place*, that is the devils place and these great mens rooms which they filled, their grandour and authority was overturned exceedingly (for, the Scripture useth to expresse folks total overthrow by this, that their place is not discernable, they are so clean swept away, *Psal. 37. 10. Job 7. 10. 20. 9.*) for here all was quite altered, and they were casten out of heaven, that is, from Authority and respect and also from publick heathenish worship when Christianity became to be approved, as it was more fully explained in the sixth seal, *Chap. 6.* Their Temples were destroyed, idols defaced; and whereas the devil before was openly worshipped by them, now he wanteth the estimation of a god-head and divinity when the Gospel discovereth him. It is like Christs word, *I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning*, that is, from that estimation and respect or rule that he had amongst the people, while in darknesse he sat on his throne, from which he was cast by the preached Gospel, so as he was never so openly and settledly admitted to such rule and respect again. This allusion is to Satans first casting out of heaven, and *Lucifers*, *Isa. 14.* when God (as it is *Exod. 12.*) took vengeance on their gods.

3. This is more fully set forth, *vers. 9.* in two steps, 1. The place whereto he was cast, and who he is. It is to the earth, as opposit to heaven, 1. in respect of his throne in Idolatry and Temples he is cast down and put to contempt, as the earth is sometimes taken. 2. In respect of civil Authority, he is cast from that, to be among the common sort, the supream magistracie being pulled out of his hand whereby he was said to have the throne. 3. As the earth is opposed to the Church of Christ as well as to a Church-state, he was put from treading on her and making her the seat of his war professedly as before, he was now restrained from raging at his pleasure there, though not altogether; he doth not now openly on the throne relgn, but is cast down, as it were, amongst commons, to endeavour by subtilty what before he assayed openly; like a *Serpent*, now he is put to creep with his wiles which follows after; for, his spewing out heresies after the woman, and his reigning, as it were, by his lieutenant, saith, he was not cast out of the Church simple, but in respect of what he was formerly, after this he is necessitated to take a more indirect under-hand way.

4. The *Dragon* is described by some properties, expressed in his names, 1. *That old Serpent*, for subtilty a *Serpent*, *Gen. 3.* yea old, as not having begun to deceive then, but now of great experience in that trade; he is an old deceiver. 2. *Devil*, a calumniator, tearing folks with reproaches and slanders, whereof that time was full; thus he slandereth Christians before others. 3. *Satan*, that is, an adversary or accuser: this

this looketh mainly to him as an accuser and traducer of the Godly before Gods bar and justice, as he did *Job*, Chap. 1. This expresseth his serpentine nature, who is in himself deceitful, and the miserable effect of it to them who trust him, as our first parents did, they are deceived. Thus is the devil described as a *Serpent* to tempt and beguile the world, a *devil* to slander and pierce through innocents with calumnies, and *Satan* to traduce men to God and God to men *Zech.* 3. all agree well to him. Again, his *angels were cast out with him*: wo to them that stand and fall with the devil. In a word, his special instruments, idolatrous Priests, and cruel Heathen persecuters, all they are cast down together; as he wanteth the supream honour in Civil and Ecclesiastick dignity, so as he formerly enjoyed it, so do they want their inferiour dignities and places: when wicked great men are cast down, many under-instruments ruine with them. The allusion is, as we said, to Satans casting from Heaven, that kepted not his first habitation, *Jude* 6. and to Lucifer, *Isa.* 14. holding forth, that now by this victory not only the great agent the devil, the supream commander, but his under-officers were also pinched and brought low.

The Song followeth, in a congratulatory way expressing the same thing in plain terms without figures. 1. The victory is laid down, *vers.* 10. 2. The mean or way whereby they attained it, or their weapons, *vers.* 11. 3. The use or effects of it, both to heaven and earth.

This delivery is so notable that it is and shall be the ground of a Song in the Church, whereby both the greatnesse of it and the certainty of it is expressed, and the Churches duty also: the former events are two wayes expressed; the first, *vers.* 5. The childes exalting, is expounded to be the coming of Salvation, that is, deliverance from that persecuted condition, which they had been so long praying for. 2. Strength, that is, the evidencing of Gods strength in bringing the Church through and giving her who was weak, strength to bring forth. 3. The Kingdom of our God, as *Chap.* 11. 15. It is the magnifying of His Kingdom and declaring Him to be King; which though really it was alway, yet was it not so known in the world before. 4. The power of His Christ, that is, His taking to Himself power and reigning, as *Chap.* 11. 15. 17. which is called (*Chap.* 6.) The day of His wrath: Christ who in the worlds eyes was thought little of and weak before this, now His power kytheth, and enemies are made to say, He is a great God, as was cleared on *Chap.* 6. ult.

The second effect of the devils casting to the earth from Heaven, is expressed in that *he is cast down*, that is, dethroned, put from the visible Kingdom and Authority which he had when the worlds authority countenanced him. Now these are upon the Lords side, and the Kingdom is His, when this accuser, (whereof formerly we spoke, *vers.* 9.) who unceasingly pursued the Godly, is put quite out of respect be what he was in, and Christianity brought in request, *Psal.* 22. 28. These words being plain and the scope being to resume the former delivery in a ground of praise, there is a clear key here to open all this vision; for, what was casting from heaven, is here casting down or degrading.

This 11. *vers.* holdeth forth the weapons, 1. Faith in Christs blood, whereby all these accusations were repelled as with a shield, *Eph.* 6. and seeing He died, who can lay any thing to their charge? *Rom.* 8. 34. They are saved before God through His righteousness, that is the ground of their victory: He is called the Lamb in reference to the Sacrifices, and so it pointeth out this to be the effect of His own offering up of Himself; all the Saints victories flow from this. 2. The word of their testimony, is their stedfast adherence to their profession, and their confession of that Truth, as *Chap.* 6. 9. called (*Rom.* 10.) confession unto righteousness with the mouth; which testimony, in despite of torments, exceedingly defeateth the

devil. A clear and full testimonie is an excellent ornament to Christianity, and giveth a special charge and defeat to the devil. What a testimonie is, we shew in the fifth seal, *Chap.* 6. which is contemporary with this; this is not only really to be found within, but in appearance and profession to be so also before men. The third weapon is suffering, *They loved not their lives*, that is, when a testimonie was called-for they cared not for their life, as Paul said, *Acts* 21. It was not dear to them, and they were not swayed with the consideration of suffering. This may appear, 1. by their joyful suffering of the most cruel death. 2. By their refusing deliverance at the most seeming easie rate, as was marked before, *Chap.* 6. 5. seal: so that as it is in *Plinius secundus*, they thought it needlesse to seek to punish these who more willingly offered themselves, and more chearfully suffered than any could pursue them.

The last part of the Song, *vers.* 12. hath two things in it, poetically setting out, 1. The happy condition of the Godly, who are called dwellers in heaven, because their conversation is there. 2. The miserable condition of earthly-minded Professors, or these who were without the Church; the one might rejoyce, for they had a present delivery; the other hath a wo coming to them, or a lamentation or alace pronounced for them, because this succeeding trial would destroy more souls than the other did bodies, from two reasons, 1. The devil was come down to them; having no hopes of successe against the stedfast seed, he was now to take another way that would prevail against many rotten Professors; or, being driven from the Authority of the Empire, he would rage more amongst and against other heathenish people both within and without the Empire. 2. He hath great wrath: though his power was broken, yet his enmity was no whit abated, but rather irritated and stirred up; and the reason is added, because he saw his kingdom in the world, wherein for a long time he had kepted preeminence, was begun to fall, which would by this party be brought to nought. He took this for an alarm of his final ruine and restraint within the pit, which he knoweth is abiding him; and ere long (in respect of eternity or that time he had before) he was to get that sentence executed on him, so that the world had no ground to be secure: and, it may be, that what is spoken of the earths drinking up the flood, which was by him intended to destroy the woman, is the accidental effect or consequent wherein this wo consisteth. It is like that word (*Mat.* 18.) *wo to the world because of offences*: for, the great weight of all these ills which he now multiplieth, falleth upon the poor earthly Professors that make no conscience of watching against them; for the Churches flying which followeth, hath safety with it to these who are her true seed, but it is a wo to the earth, from whom she fleeth, because then the devil hath all left to him without that publick opposition that a standing Church made to him. It is no little mercy when there is a publick Church state, and no little curse when she is not so discernable. Hence *Observe*.

1. When the Church seemeth weakest, like a poor woman travelling, and enemies seem strongest, like a great red Dragon, even then the Church is strong and hath more for her than against her, if she saw them as the Prophet said to his servant, 2 *King.* 6. 16. 2. In the Churches weakest time she losseth no battel, and the devil in his strongest time never prevailleth; nay, when his instruments are taken the blood of Christians, they are but pulling down their own throne and establishing Christs. Better be a single Souldier on Christs side, than a Commander of a whole Army against Him. 3. See what sort of enemy the Church hath to do with, and what cause she hath to watch. 4. From the Song *Observe*. The saddest conflicts of the people of God have joyfull outgates, there is an excellent song here on the flying of the Dragons persecution, as *Chap.* 11. before: an



and it is, so in all the difficulties of Believers, there is a delivery attending every one of them, a day after the darkest night, a fair sun-shine after every showre, a long eternity of joy after a temporary affliction. Bear your trials the better, and wait for

an outgate when God shall be pleased to give it; and if he delay, think it not long, it is coming, when or how, he knoweth in whose hands are times and seasons, which is not for us to know.

## LECTURE III.

*Verf. 13. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child.*

*14. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might flee into the wilderness, into her place: where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the Serpent.*

*15. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood, after the woman: that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.*

*16. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.*

*17. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

**T**His part of the Chapter containeth a new trial of the Church: which though it be obscure, yet these things are clear, 1. That as to the time thereof it doth succeed and that immediately to her first trial and her travelling under heathenish persecution is over, and doth precede the open appearing of Antichrist, which followeth in the beginning of the next Chapter: and therefore it must continue the story of the Churches condition from Constantinus coming to the Empire, about the year 310. untill the year, 606. or thereby: which in the fifth trumpet, Chap. 9. was cleared to be the time of the discovery of Antichrist. 2. It is from this clear, that it must contemporate with the first four trumpets, Chap. 8. and so must in the event be the same. It is more shortly and generally set down here, because it was more largely insisted on in these, and because the scope of this vision is especially to describe Antichrists kingdom, which was more obscurely and shortly pointed at by the fifth trumpet, Chap. 9. and what followed thereon, Chap. 11. And so the scope of this part, is to continue the series of the Churches condition between her open sufferings under the Dragon and heathen persecutors, and the open appearing of the Beast, or Antichrist: for, though that be the main scope of this vision, to set forth the Beasts kingdom; yet because that did not immediately succeed the former, and the Churches declining was not instantly at its height, and the devil was never idle, therefore here is shown an intervening exercise whereby the devil assaileth either utterly to undo her, or at least to make way for the beasts advancement, which could not without foregoing preparation be expected to have such universal welcome in the world: and as John is the more short in setting down this, so may we be in explicating of it, having already spoken to it on Chap. 8.

In the words, 1. the devils design is laid down, *ver. 13.* 2. The Churches safety is expressed, *ver. 14.* 3. A new mean used by him to pursue his design, is foretold, *ver. 15.* 4. The Churches preservation from that, and the mean thereof followeth, *ver. 16.* And lastly, The devils grand design which he in a great measure accomplisheth in the following Chapter, is hinted, *ver. 17.* so that every verse hath a new material step of

the Churches exercise, wherein the devils uncessant malice on the one side, and the Lords gracious care and sovereignty on the other, do in this contest eminently appear.

The first is set forth, *ver. 13.* in two, 1. The devils design and work, *He persecuted the woman which had brought forth the man-child:* This differeth from what is spoken of, *ver. 4.* (although that be persecution also) in these three, 1. In the object whom he persecuteth; it is the woman which brought forth the man-child, whereas before it was the man-child it self, *ver. 4.* The parties are, upon the matter, the same: But the Church, considered in her complex nature, as an associated body, with Ordinances of Word, Sacraments, Discipline or Government, is called the woman, because as such, she bringeth forth, and is a Mother. Again, as she is considered in her particular Members and professors, these are said to be her children; so that the difference in this respect, is that formerly the devil endeavoured immediately to cut off all professors that bear the name of Christianity, by heathenish persecution; seeking to destroy the Church in her Members; for, if there be no professors, there can be no Church: here again, seeing that failed him, and he could no longer command men to take the lives of particular Christians on that account, he doth not now war directly against them, but he seeketh to corrupt the Church indirectly, that by overturning the Ordinances in her, he might mar her former beauty that she appeared in, *ver. 1.* as a woman clothed with the Sun: that so she being no woman, might be no mother, whereby indirectly he might gain his point, in poisoning the seed: this is done by the awakening and spreading of schismes and heresies in the Church, which though they do not directly strike against the being of Christians or particular professors; yet do they no less strike against the life of Christianity in the purity and power of its Ordinances, without which there can be no Church, although men as men continue to live. Hence we may gather the second and third difference, to wit, in the instruments that he maketh use of, and in the manner of his pursuing this new design, which is not violently and openly by heathen men who were without, as formerly he had done, but more subtilly and covertly by professing Christians he endeavoureth this. He is now said to persecute

*persecute* : not as if he had not formerly persecuted ; but to shew, that although he had altered his way in the former respects, yet was his design no less malicious in respect of himself, nor hurtful in respect of the Church than the former was.

2. The occasion of this his new heat against the Church and the change of his former way, is set down, *And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth* : which importeth, 1. The ground of his irritation, to wit, the former foil which he had gotten ; he is so indefatigable an enemy, that having gotten one defeat, he doth (and that the more uncessantly) endeavour to recover what was lost, which ought to make men most vigilant, even then when they seem to have most advantage. 2. It sheweth the reason why now he seeketh the corrupting of the Church, the Mother, in this new subtle way, and doth not directly pursue the Child as he had done, because now by his former overthrow he found himself cast unto the earth, so that he could not have men directly to own his designs and to give him obedience as formerly when the supream Magistrates were for him. 3. It sheweth the immediate connexion of this his design and what followed thereupon with the Churches former deliverance ; so that no sooner doth he find himself disappointed of one mean, but he doth assay another. If it be asked, how the former deliverance could be such ground of joy to the Church, seeing this doth immediately follow upon it ? *Ans.* 1. It was certainly great ground of praise and honour to God, and great ground of joy and rejoycing to the Saints, in it self, whatever effect accidentally through Satans malice and mens corruption might follow upon it ; for, by it the Lord eminently vindicated His name, Truth and Servants from former reproaches and oppressions, and gave unto His Church great freedom if it had been well improved. 2. Although the devil instantly began this new design, yet it was not at once brought to a height, and therefore it might be matter of rejoycing to the Church, to have that interval which followed between the height of Heathenish persecution and that of Antichrists which was to come, beside other reasons given in the close of the former Lecture.

*Vers. 14.* The Churches safety is set forth in these circumstances, 1. In the mean by which she was preserved, *To the woman were given two wings of a great eagle* : this alludeth to the manner of Gods bringing Israel out of Egypt, which is said to be as upon Eagles wings, *Exod. 19. 4.* that is, a wonderful and speedy delivery, so that the means used by the devil to hurt, were not able to reach his end. We take it to be that same which is mentioned, *Chap. 7. 1, 2, &c.* of the Lords sealing His Elect against that coming storm, and that same, *Chap. 11. 1.* of His commanding to measure the Temple : Because, 1. both these relate to the same persons, to wit, the true Church. And, 2. to the same time, to wit, immediately after Heathenish persecution. And, 3. to the same scope, to wit, the preservation of the Lords own from these tempestuous storms or floods, which by the trumpets were to come upon the visible Church.

2. The place whereto the woman is to flee, is mentioned, *that she might flee into the wilderness.* It is called *her place*, because, (*vers. 6.*) it was prepared of God for her, and doth set forth the Lords sovereignty in ordering her safety, and by special providences carrying out the place of her security, as having appointed it for her long before the trial came. By *wilderness* we are not to conceive any such particular place in any desert, but hereby is meant that the Lord seeth to the safety of His Church in the midst of the confusions of the world, as if she were locally removed from all fellowship with them to a desert. More particularly it alludeth to the Lords way of bringing the people of Israel out of Egypt, who, immediately after their great and joyful delivery from Pharaoh out of Egypt, were not brought unto the land of Canaan, but for a long time lived in the wilderness, where though they were freed from their former oppression, and had much liberty to worship God publicly, which they

had not in Egypt, yet wanted they not many trials, and through their corruptions many sins ; so here is holden forth a wilderness-state of the Church, contemporary with, and suitable unto the Prophets prophesying in sackcloth : which we may take up particularly to consist in these, 1. in a condition that is safe, as being now out of the way of hazard. 2. As in a great part latent and not discernable to the men of the world, as if she had been removed to some desert. 3. A comfortless and solitary outward condition, with which, although the true Church was not immediately pinched after Heathenish persecution, yet were the most faithful ever liable thereto in all the Churches trials ; and it came to an height under Antichrist, with whom this wilderness-state doth contemporate. 4. It holdeth forth an eclipse of the visible and spiritual lustre and beauty of the Church which doth not now shine amongst men as formerly it did, no more than if she were removed to a wilderness.

3. In this *verse* we have the Lords care of her and provision for her during this time, she is not to starve there, though now the world about her be become a wilderness ; yet *she is nourished*, that is, 1. hath spiritual food provided for her and blessed of God to her, so that when tradition, superstition, idolatry, and that which cannot nourish, do abound amongst the generality of them who are called Christians, even then she hath the sincere milk of the Word appointed for her ; and that in such a way as the world knew not whence it came : in which there is an allusion to Gods way of feeding the *Israelites* extraordinarily in the wilderness, and to His providing for *Elias* by the Ravens, when he durst not be seen in Israel. 2. This, that *she is nourished*, holdeth forth the Lords kind manner of communicating this provision to His Church in her strait, so that although she be not feasted as sometimes a stranger will do another, yet doth He nourish her as a Mother or Nurse do their sucking child. 3. It implieth the Lords continuing of Ministers with her during that time, who should be for number and qualifications fitted for feeding of her : Therefore, *vers. 6.* It is said, *that she hath a place prepared of God, where they should feed her, &c.* that is, the Prophets mentioned in the former Chapter.

4. The time of her stay, is, *for a time, and times, and half a time*, that is, the same with what was mentioned, *vers. 6.* and *Chap. 11.* and in the following Chapter. It is here repeated, 1. to shew the certainty of this event. 2. To shew that it is the same with that, mentioned, *vers. 6.* and contemporary with these of the same extent, *Chap. 11.* and *13.* And, 3. It is mentioned in these words with allusion to that of *Dan. 7. 25.* wherein the tyranny of *Antiochus* over the Church of the Jews is expressed almost in the same terms ; *a time*, that is one year ; *times*, that is, two years : and *the dividing of a time* there, sheweth some odd number of dayes ; but here being *half a time*, it is to make it agreeable with the other reckonings of forty two moneths, three years and an half, &c. In sum it is to shew, that while her Prophets prophesie in sackcloth, and Antichrist possesseth the outter Court, she is to be in the wilderness.

5. The end of this fleeing, is, *from the face of the Serpent*, that is, to be preserved from his fury and rage, as if she had been conveyed out of sight.

To apply this of the Churches fleeing more particularly, 1. We will find it the same thing, and belonging to the same time with that sealing, mentioned, *Chap. 7.* and that measuring that is described in the former Chapter : both which shew a low condition of the Church in respect of the paucity of Professors, her latentness, and inconspicuousness as to the former beauty and visible protection, and the respect, protection and carefulness that is upon the Lords side, in reference to these few. Therefore, 2. by this fleeing of the woman, we are not to understand any local mutation of the Church, but a



disappearing of the true Church in respect of what she was; for, the sealed ones continue under the storm with the rest, and are preserved from that hurt, *chap. 9. 1.* not by any local transmigration from one place to another, but by Gods secret protection, and sealing; and the Temple standeth where it was, even when it was measured by for the Lord, *chap. 11. 1.* although by the addition of humane inventions, superstitions and ceremonies, and especially by the swarms of locusts, mentioned, *chap. 9.* who were so numerous in the outer Court, that the Temple and these few in it who yet retained the true Altar, were scarce discernable, and that field of the Church, which was pleasant before, by their corruption is made like unto a wilderness, as to the spiritual beauty which formerly she enjoyed; and thus the Church is said to flee, when by Antichrists sitting down on her, and overpreaching her, she doth not appear as formerly, but he and his followers who tread the outer Court, are seen to fill the room where she was. And thus, even Papists expound and apply this place, (as we hinted at in the former Chapter) illustrating it thus, that as now in England was Church & City they may be said to be fled to the wilderness, because that conspicuous Catholick Church, which was hitherto, is obscured by the overpreaching of Hereticks as they called them, although there be yet within the same bounds abundance of true Catholicks who remain a part of the true Church, so that they the Churches general flight under Antichrist, is to be conceived to be her general obscuring by the number of his followers, whereas there shall be still, even in these several bounds over which he governeth, such a number of true Catholicks as shall still make up a true Church. And this we conceive, being rightly applied to the corruption of the true Church, is the very same thing mentioned here. This inconspicuousness and latency, is not any change on the persons who continue Professors of the true Church, as Papists blindly impute to us; but here the devils design being against the purity of Ordinances and the Church as considered complexly as a woman and mother, it is in that respect that she is said especially to flee; because, that although the persons continue still visible, yet the former purity of Ordinances, Truths of the Gospel and simple way of Church communion, which formerly made her conspicuous, is now made exceeding undiscernable, and she in that respect is made as it were to flee; so that now, partly, through the multitude of corruptions, superstitions, &c. that infect the Church, and partly, through the fear of Professors, and hazard that there is openly to disown these, it cometh exceeding difficult to discern purity of Doctrine and the simple way of Worship, and these who sincerely adhere thereto, although such indeed continue still to be free from the corruptions of Doctrine, superstitions of Worship and these who were infected therewith, but these last become so predominant over the face of the Christian world, that the former is conceived to be removed, and all are accounted to be of this one corrupt way, the harmony thereof is so general. And what the Papists plead for in the pretended universality of the Romish Catholick Religion, is from this found to be in a great part truth, and to be acknowledged so, is being the very fulfilling of this prophesie, 4. We are not to conceive, that these who obscure the beauty of the Church, and are said to possess the outer Court, are indeed persons simply extrinseck to the visible Church, but extrinseck as to the corruptions, stealing in and infecting the generality of the Members of the visible Church, by whom the Ordinances of Doctrine, Worship and Government, are corrupted; which again have influence upon the corrupting of her Members: this fleeing then of the Woman is an inward infection, whereby her former Church state is quite altered and turned to be another thing, as if she were not in the same place where she was, even as, under the Law, it is said of the 72, that by their

whoring from God and defilements, that she was defiled from within, 1. 1. when they were and appeared to be as suitable as their federal relation to God, although they kept still their pretence thereof; so here, the Church is said to flee from the generality of these false professors, Christians, what they become, by their corruptions, unsuitable to a Church, although they pretend still to a profession thereof, it being inconsistent with the being of a pure Church, to alter and corrupt the purity of Ordinances, as for one so continue in one place, and to flee from it, at the same time. This distinction between the woman or pure profession and Professors from whose superadded corruptions and declining professions is not so much or only to be gathered from a strict division and separation supposed to be between them, in respect of place, ordinance and profession, as if the true worshippers were in one place, and the declined Church in another, without any external communion in any part of worship together, during this time; but in this especially, that these true worshippers, though living amongst the others, did yet keep themselves from their corruptions, and from communicating in them with those who were corrupted; at least in such a manner as was not to be the foundation, although in many accidents and circumstances it might be epinared in the common course of the time, yet keeping still the foundation of essential truths and worship, whereby they continue to be true Members of the Church, and to have the reality and power of Ordinances amongst them, although much obscured by the building of many fables, &c. and such like thereupon, which may yet be consistent with their Salvation, as we may gather from the deserting of many worthy men, who wanted not their accession to many superstitious ceremonies and practices, who yet, by retaining the foundation of Gospel truths, cannot be denied to be true Members of the true Church; and this falling of such, hath no little influence on the Churches fleeing and bringing of her in respect of her Church state into this wilderness and latent condition, even as in the times of the Jews defections, and particularly, of that in the days of Ahab, we will find many thousands continuing really to be true worshippers of the true God in things simply fundamental, and not to bow the knee to Baal, or totally to partake of the common apostasie, although they might continue publick communion in many things with the rest, and it is like in every thing not keep such distance with these defections, and profess the Truths as she came them, as by their continuance in that Kingdom, where the publick pure worship of God was so discountenanced, and by their being undiscernable even so, Ahab seemeth to be manifested, and in this case the Lord might feed and nourish them, by continuing some faithful Ministers for their cause, as he had done, some Prophets even in Israel, although they knew not who were benefited by them; or so much solid Truth of His Gospel in the midst of much superstition and humane invention, which being chosen by them, and separated from the poisonous additions, might prove solid food by Gods blessing to them, whereas others of that same society might starve, or poison themselves by their forbearing of the Truth that was continued, and their drinking in of the errors and superstitions that were added; and according to this, we will find in the writings of many, where these corruptions are most frequent, yet sometimes so much solid Truth, that if it be cleanly separated, and wailed out from that infectious leaven, may prove useful & nourishing to souls. And hence it is, that even amongst those who had no visible stated separation from Popery, there may be said to be continued a true Church, in as far as the Lord continued these Truths, and no question, had some amongst them for whose behove He did continue them, as a Church to Kings, although the Popish Church as such, was not the true Church, but contradistinguished from it; and in this respect, the visible Church



at that time, at least in part, and the antichristian Church, are to be distinguished in respect of this, different consideration of Prophecies, to wit, that general declined Church is antichristian, may be considered in her adherence to him, and owning of all his corruptions, whereby she carries his mark; but, as considered in respect of those who retain the foundation and basis of the fundamental Truths of Christ and truly adhere to him, these are the Church of Christ, although in respect of their declining and partial defection they be an impure and obseure Church, whereof something is said, Chap. 12. *Let us now* and more may be said (God willing), after words.

61. *This fleeing of the woman*, and defection of the Church, is not to be conceived as instantly at an height; or, during this whole time, to be accounted of equal greatness; for although it begin immediately after heathenish persecution, as is said, and before the beasts' publick appearing; yea, before the flood be cast out of the Dragons' mouth; yet is he for a time in sight: therefore it is said, that he cast out the flood, after her. And therefore we are not to account the Church, during the first four trumpets, to be no Church, but a declining or fleeing Church, as being in her way to this wilderness condition. It would not therefore be thought, that that state of the Church, during the first four famous general Councils, wherein the Truths of God were vindicated, is to be paralleled with that corrupt state which succeeded to these; yet, considering the beginning of the decay of purity of Doctrine and simplicity of Worship in the Church, and the way that was then accidentally made for Antichrist's publick appearing, as we cleared on the first four trumpets; and considering the way, how periods are reckoned in this prophesie, (whereof more was said on Chap. 11. *Leture 4.*) we conceive it is safe therefore, and only agreeable to the nature of these periods, to fix the time as is said.

In the 14. *vers.* we have the Serpents malicious craft against the woman set down, 1. In the mean he maketh use of, it is water as a flood. 2. There is the fountain this springeth from, 3. he cast it out of his mouth. 4. There is (to say so) the object, in reference to which he directeth this flood; it is, after the woman. Lastly, There is his design, that is, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. By this water as a flood, we understand errors; and that in a most abundant measure and violent manner. Sometimes they are compared to winds, as Chap. 7. sometimes again to water that is very tumultuous, as Jude 13. the maintainers of them are called raging waves of the sea. They are compared to a flood, to hold forth, 1. the abundance of them. 2. the sudden rise of them. 3. their impetuosity. 4. the hurtfulness of them, which do drown souls and overturn the face of the visible Church as floods do fields. That errors must be understood here, these things will clear, 1. That this flood proceedeth out of the Devils mouth, who is a liar and the father thereof, and sendeth living spirits out into the mouths of others. 2. It is clear from the contemporary prophesie of the first four trumpets; for this holdeth forth the troubles of the Church immediately after heathenish persecution; the event, all being exactly conform, as was clear in the 8. *vers.* doth confirm this. The Serpent is said to cast this flood out of his mouth, which importeth, 1. that the original of all error is from the devil the father of lies. And what kind of waters can describe what proceed out of such a mouth? This is to make men loose all cleaving from Truth; for the devil hath, as he were disgorged himself by sending abroad such a thing, as is imported by a suddenness in the rise, and a vehemency in the driving on of such errors, that he did not only spew them out of his mouth, but he did cast them with a kind of violence and force. Lastly, It sheweth also his malice that throweth such floods after a fleeing woman. This agreeth well also (ac-

ording to the former application under the first four trumpets) unto the primitive errors, which indeed were like a flood, and were most violently carried on to the great hurt of the Church. This lesseth us see how impetuous error will be for a time, and what height in the justice of God it may come unto. It is said to be cast after the woman; which doth not only import his lavelling it at her, and his seeking thereby to infect the Ordinances, and the Mother that bringeth forth, and the true Spouse of Jesus Christ, (for she resteth the world her dear and much value them.) But also, it doth import, that the woman was moving. And, 2. she be took the advantage of her moving, as it were, to carry her then more easily away before she could settle; this is clear from the fourth thing, which is his design, to wit, that he might cause her to be carried away with the flood. It is not said, that he might drive her with the flood; but that with such errors he might drive her from Truth and stedfastness therein, and carry her away in that flood with the rest of the unstable World; and so in a word that he might undo her, that she should be no Woman and no Church. We conceive the great to be answerable to these two, 1. The Church by temporal pomp and grandeur, and multiplying of ceremonies, and such like, did begin her flight of the true Church, and did some way by that declining obscure her. 2. When spirits were grown somewhat carnal and had fallen from their former simplicity, then the devil took advantage to raise up abominable errors, and did deliver them on impetuously, intending thereby to destroy all, and involve the few that keep their garments clean in these abominations; which two are clear in story, as hath been formerly said.

In the 16. *vers.* we have the remedy and cover provided against this storm, whereby the Devils design is disappointed, as is said, And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the Dragon had cast out of his mouth. In the general, this seemeth hard to be expounded, or applied, yet we must follow the simple scope and strain of the allegory, which is this, that as the devil casteth out errors like floods to carry away the Church, as proper floods of water do carry things before them, so the Lord doth provide means to drain and dry up these floods of errors, as effectually as the earths opening of its mouth will soon dry up a flood. And, as being somewhat certain what the floods are, it will be safest to look to the means which in the same were made use of for the restraining of these abominations.

The verse hath two things, 1. The mean or instrument of the womans help, and the earth helped the woman. 2. There is the manner how the earth administrerth this help. The one is, her mouth, and she swallowed up the flood which the Dragon had cast out of his mouth. By earth here, we cannot understand the world, as contradicting it from the visible Church, because there is no way conceivable of their helping the woman against errors: Neither in the event, will anything of that be required; for, these Goths, and Vandals that invaded the Empire, did altogether befriend the Arians, and were enemies to the pure Church. We must then by earth understand the visible Church at that time, which was declining from the simplicity of the Gospel and becoming earthly in her services and administrations, as we heard, Chap. 7. she swallowed up the wind which the wind was to blow upon. This is said to be done under a flood here, to wit, of the declining visible Church, and is considered distinguished from the pure Members of the Church, which were clear. 1. Because it must necessarily be understood of the visible Church, and yet it is expressly distinguished from the woman and her seed that comprehendeth the pure Members. Therefore by earth here must be understood that part of the visible Church, which was declining from its purity. 2. There is no way of applying of the earth opening its mouth



and drinking up of that flood, but to understand it of that declining Church, as is said. 3. The event also will clear it, as somewhat was said, Chap. 8. and what we may now hint, will further evidence. Lastly, There is no other thing will suit the allegory; as the application will make appear. If it be asked, how the visible Church can be called the earth during the first four trumpets? *Ans.* 1. We must not have respect only to the first four trumpets, but to the whole period of all the six; and therefore as the woman is contra-distinguished from the visible Church, and said to be hid for the space of 1260. dayes, because her low condition came to a height in that time, though for a time she wanted not liberty, even so in opposition to that, the declining part of the visible Church, during that time, is called *earth*, because in that period her earthliness came to a height, although for a time it was but advancing. And upon this ground, Antichrist and his followers, are said to tread the outter Court, Chap. 11. 2, 3. during all that whole period, though for a considerable time he came not to a height. And this answer must be admitted, otherwise there is no agreeing of these prophecies, which speak of the whole period as at its height, when notwithstanding, they have many degrees to pass before they come to that. 2. That visible Church may be called the *earth*, because of its earthly pomp and grandour, having great titles, contests for precedency, ample temporal governments in her officers, and such like; whereby she looked more earthly-like in her carriage and proceedings than the first primitive Church which appeared clothed with the Sun, and in a heavenly frame in the beginning of the Chapter. 3. She may be called the *earth*, that helped the woman, because of the countenance that oftentimes she had of civil Magistrates and the concurrence that was between the then visible Church and the Magistrates at that time for the suppressing of errors. 4. It may be said the *earth* helped the woman, because of the general concurrence of multitudes of all Nations within the visible Church, which being compared with the few single ones, might be called by this name. It is here to be adverted, that when we speak of the *earths* concurring to help the woman during that time, that it is not to be supposed that many of the good Emperours and ancient Fathers are to be accounted of this declining Church, as it is contra-distinguished from the woman: for though they be distinguished, yet they are not separated in place, but, as hath often been said, they might be in one Council and yet fall under this contra-distinction. Beside, the visible Church at that time is not denominated from any honest persons that were in her, but from her general tendency to earthliness in worship during this period, as is said. Also we will find this necessity of distinguishing many of the womans seed that lived under Antichrist from being a part of his Church even in the darkest time.

The second thing in the verse, is, the manner how this part of the visible Church helpeth the true Church, *The earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the Dragon cast out of his mouth.* By *earth* we understand, as is said, the declining part of the visible Church, which in end became antichristian. And among other reasons why she is called the *earth* here, we conceive this is one, because that declining Church was to preserve the Truth in reference to these four primitive errors, even in its most earthly temper and in its lowest degree of declining, by which the Doctrine of the God-head and of the Person of our blessed Lord Jesus hath been preserved for the benefit of the womans seed, even amongst their corrupt Writers. Also this exposition of *earth*, will answer the allegory well; for, as the *earths* drinking up of floods, is the ordinary way whereby they are asswaged, So the visible Church, her opening of her mouth, that is, by serious exhortations in preachings, disputes in writings, determinations in Synods and Councils, and such like, is the ordinary and approved mean of re-

straining error and preserving Truth. It is said, *The earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood, which the Dragon cast out of his mouth.* This swallowing doth not imply any affection and love to that flood, for she doth not kindly drink it; But it importeth, 1. an indignation at it. 2. a haste and speediness in concurring for drying up the same. 3. a ridding of marches in some full and eminent manner for the vindicating of these Truths. In the former verse the devil is called the *Serpent*, because he was carrying his design closely; here he is called the *Dragon*, because his design cometh to be discovered. It is not said that the earth did swallow up the flood which the Dragon did cast after the woman, but simply, the flood that he cast out of his mouth: the reason of this is, because the earth (that is, the declining Church) when indeed materially she was helping the woman the pure Church, yet had she no discerning of that distinction, but was only provoked with indignation against these abominable errors, though as to the event the Lord made good help to His true Church out of the same.

Now, to consider the application of this in the event, we will find it fully agreeable to this prophesie, 1. When the devil raised up four gross abominable errors immediately after the Churches obtaining of peace, there was a general concurrence of the plurality of the visible Church and Officers thereof for discovering, confuting and condemning the same; and censuring the abettors thereof; thus they are, the first heresie, to wit, that of *Arius*, which denied the eternity of the God-head of the Son, was condemned by the first famous Council at *Nice*, during the reign of *Constantine* the Great, and by his concurrence. The second error of the *Macdonians*, who denied the personality of the holy Ghost, was condemned by the second general Council, which was the first at *Constantinople*: this was convoked by *Theodosius* the Great. The third error of *Nestorius*, who divided Christs Natures, and asserted him to have two Persons as well as two Natures, was condemned by the third famous general Council at *Ephesus* under *Theodosius* the second. A fourth principal fundamental error, was that of *Eutyches*, who on the contrary of *Nestorius*, did confound the Natures of Christ and assert Him to have but one Nature, as he is but one Person: this was under *Martianus* the Emperour. Now, considering that in the event there is such a general concurrence of the whole Church, even when there were failings and a decay in many things: this may well look like the *earths* drying up of the flood, and be a part of the fulfilling of this prophesie; especially if we consider, in the second place, that these Truths were not only maintained during the first four trumpets, while the Church was not altogether out of sight (for, the last error, is cast out after the woman, as well as the first, which importeth her to have had some visibility all that time) but, in her most declining times, she hath kept these Truths concerning the God-head of the Son, the personality of the Holy Ghost, the personal natures of our blessed Lord Jesus were still kept pure in the time of the greatest darkness of Popery, In Gods providence the antichristian Church being constrained to acknowledge these four general Councils, and these particular Truths maintained in them, in opposition to the former errors: yea, (laying aside their curiosity) many of their corrupt School-men have done well to this purpose: wherefore here we would advert, 1. That their keeping pure these fundamental Truths in that Church, is a thing especially designed of God, and cometh to pass by His providence; and being foretold, as to Him, it could not be otherwise. 2. We may advert and gather here; that the antichristian Church is not in every fundamental point of Christianity to be corrupt: for, in particular it is prophesied of her, that she shall keep these Doctrines pure, and nor receive the flood of the first impetuous errors; for, the earth here, is that same earth upon which the wind bloweth,

bloweth, Chap. 7. and hurteth with Antichrists delusions, and the same earth or world, which in the Chapter following is said to worship the beast. 3. We may enquire after the reasons why the Lord thinketh good to make use of that Church for preserving of these Truths, First, One reason is clear in the Text, that thereby the woman, that is, the pure Church, not only during the first four trumpets, when things were not altogether corrupt, as was said; but also under the fifth and sixth, might be fed, and these most necessary and fundamental truths might be preserved for that end, and for preventing her being overmastered or ensnared by these errors: for, it is like, had not these Truths been generally acknowledged as determined by the Church, many more, even of the Elect, had been in hazard by the subtilty of these Hereticks: and considering that oftentimes the sincere number are few in the visible Church, and there is no attaining of a publick determination for Truth, without the concurrence of many otherways unsound, Therefore when the Lord in an extraordinary manner stirreth up such to concur for such an end, it is a great help to the Church. And indeed we see in these primitive times, even when Truth had been confirmed, that afterward Error got the advantage of the plurality upon its side, and pretended determinations for it, as in the history of the Councils may be seen. Sometimes the *Arians* in numerous Councils had but few opposers, as *Hilarius*, *Osius*, and *Paulinus*, &c. who therefore were banished because they ceded not. By which we may see, that the Lord made use of many men for concurring in the former determinations, who at other times, when the face of Authority changed, did quite alter: yet to conclude this, we may see the truth of this prophesie is fulfilled, that is, that though there be many opposite Councils unto these former, yet have these alway been acknowledged, even in the Popish Church, and many have gotten good thereof, which hath been a great help unto them. Also this may give an hint of one reason why the visible Church is so soon distinguished from the fleeing woman. And it is wonderful that when *Constantine* appeared against *Arius*, there is such a general concurrence of all sorts against him, especially of Bishops and Church-officers, and that some few years thereafter, during the time of the same Emperour, there are so few countenancers of the Truth and so many favourers of that Error, who, it is like, had sometime condemned the same. A second reason, is, the Lord would have us loving Truth wherever it may be found, if it were even among the writings of Antichrists vassals, he will not have us to measure Truth or Error by mens piety or profanely who maintain the same, neither will he have determinations of Councils to be casten, or accepted, because the plurality of the decerners are profane or holy, but He will have both squared according to the supream rule. And so we are to welcome Truth, preserved and brought down through the antichristian Church, as if it were immediately revealed. A third reason why the Lord will have these Truths preserved in Antichrists Church, is, that he may be the more vailed and the snare the greater unto the world, while he looketh like a lamb, as is said in the next Chapter: for it cannot be thought, that if he should deny any of these clear Truths, so fully confirmed by ancient Councils and Fathers, that he could prevail so suddenly and universally to bring almost the whole visible Church to give him adoration. A fourth reason may be the Lords just purpose to harden such as are wholly given up to Antichrists delusions, who, because of their owning of these Truths and their agreeing with the primitive Church in that, are the more ready to conceit, that they are successors to the first pure primitive Church, and therefore are the hardlier brought to renounce their other abominations. Fifthly, It is to shew also the Lords sovereignty over corrupt men, and His care of His Church, who can make even such to be helpful to her, when

they intend no such thing. And thus while generally they own these Truths, and while particular writers now and then fail to propose and defend other fundamental Truths, some on the one side, and some another, out of all the Lord provideth a summary of fundamentals, with which by one providence or other he feedeth and establisheth these that are His in the most secure and corrupt time.

We come now to the 17. vs. wherein the devils last grand design is generally insinuated, but is more expressly followed in the Chapter immediately succeeding, when he getteth some disappointment in the first four trumpets; It is said, *and the Dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, &c.* In which verse we have these three, 1. The increase of the devils malice, he was wroth with the woman. The Woman, or Church, had done him no wrong, yet is he wroth that he getteth not his own malice vented against her. It is a most devilish disposition when men are wroth with others because they cannot hurt them and undo them, especially the woman or her seed: and yet men being naturally of this fether, want not this devilish malignity till by grace it be subdued, though in some it appear lesse, in others more. Again, it will seem to import here, that though the devil was wroth before, and is alwayes wroth with the woman and her seed, yet that special disappointments of his designs, and her particular and extraordinary preservation, do especially gale him. This we conceive is not unsuitable to the curse that he is under, nor to the Lords glorious sovereignty over him, even to bring about his own designs upon his own head. 2. His design, as the fruit of this anger, is set down, he went to make war with the remnant of her seed. Where advert, 1. That now his design is not against the woman immediately, but against her seed, that is, not against a visible Church and the constitution and frame of Ordinances in general, but against particular Members that kept themselves pure from the corruptions of the time. The reason of the change we conceive to be this, that during the first four general Councils, and before Antichrist came to a height, he had still some fight of a visible Church and pure Ordinances as to essentials (therefore the last part of the flood is cast out after the woman, as well as the first) But when the fifth trumpet soundeth, which darkeneth the Sun and the Air, and when Antichrist ariseth, whom now he intendeth to bring to a height, there is not such a face of a visible Church or pure Ordinances to be seen as was formerly; for, she is obscured with a multitude of corrupt worshippers. The devil knoweth there is a Church, but seeing he cannot come at her, he is wroth and turneth to her seed, that is, to particular persons here or there, who preserved themselves pure. 2. It is called the remnant of her seed, because, during that time, they were to be exceeding few, even as a very smal remnant. 3. It is said, that *the Dragon went to make war with that pure remnant*: they are not a party for him, yet now when he misleth the mother he pursueth the seed who were much more discernable than any combined pure visible Church: This of making war, importeth his stretching himself to the yondmost to undo them. The third thing in the verse is, the description of the womans seed, that it may be known what are the characters whereby he doth discern them, and whereby we may discern our selves; They are two, 1. *They keep the commandments of God*: which is to be understood, 1. simply, as the word is, *Psalm 119. 6.* they have respect in their walk to all Gods Commandments though they attain not to perfection therein; *holinessse becometh Gods house for ever, Psalm 93. 5.* and is a good character of a childe of God. 2. We may understand it in opposition to the antichristian Church, who, during this time, spend their devotions in obedience to traditions and commandments of men, whereby, as Christ saith of the Pharisees, *they did make void the commandments of God.* By this we may see that vows, fastings, peregrinations



nation, as devotion, affections, and the like, though never for  
 many, wish never so much devotion, and seeming piety, will never  
 prove out to be of the seed of the true Church, whereas the  
 simple sincere practice of clear commanded duties, with suffici-  
 ently evidence the same. The second character, is, and they  
 have the testimony of Jesus Christ, that is, they are not only legal  
 in their practice, but the Mediator in all His Offices is acknow-  
 ledged by them; this also is to be understood, first, simply, that  
 they bear testimony to Christ by believing in Him, as in *John 1*  
*5.* and have His approbation in the same; 2. It is also to be  
 understood, in opposition to the corrupt multitude, who in

Concerning the unity of the

**T**his Woman being the Church, and frequently mentioned, we may consider her a little, and we will see that there is a Catholic visible Church in the days of the Gospel also. That the Church is here intended is certain; that it is the Church visible in this and in the former Chapter is also undeniable, it is her purity and deflection that is described, it is she that fleeth, it is she that hath prophets, it is she that is more or lesse visible, it is she that is persecuted by the Dragon and by Antichrist, it is she that is let on by the flood of error, it is she that travelleth, and bringeth forth seed that will lay down their lives for the testimonie of Christ: the whole scope and strain runneth on this, to set forth the state and condition of the visible Church, as we gather from this and the close of the former Chapter.

That this Church is one, we may make out in these three considerations. The Jewish Church and the Gospel church, materially and in essential things, are one; it is that same stock from which they were broken off into which the Gentiles Gospel church was ingrafted; it is that root, sap and farnesse which we now partake of that they fell from, as *Rom. 11*. Yes, when the Jews came to be grafted in again, the stock and Church is the same; it is to their old Church state that they are again restored. If then the Jewish Church state, and the Gentiles be one, yea, the Jewish Church state, before their fall, and after their recovery be essentially the same on this ground. Then the Kingdoms, or Nations, becoming the Lords, doth take in the Jews re-ingrafting, who now have had the vail long on their faces, and the Temple shut upon them; for then that Temple shall be opened, and materially they shall be entered to the substance of their ancient Priviledges and Covenant, although the administration thereof be changed. (This is here clear; for, this woman, (*Rev. 21*) is grafted in the Jewish stock, *Rom. 11*. and becometh Christs Bride, and continueth so to the end the same woman. This consideration doth shew how warrantably we may make use of the experiences of these ancient Believers, plead their general and essential priviledges to us and ours, and build on the moral grounds of their policie and the administration of this Covenant and Ordinances amongst them, seeing we are one Church with the same essential Covenant and Priviledges, although some things ceremonial were adjoynd to them.

2. The Gospel church, before Antichrist, during his reign, and what followeth, is still one Church: this followeth on the former, and is clear in that instance of the *Jews*, who are to be ingrafted in that same root that the believing *Gentiles* succeeded unto, before Antichrist arose; so the Temple is the same, when it is shut, *Chap. 11. verse 1*, and some few closed up in it, with the Temple that is open, *verse 10*, out of which many do come, *Chap. 15*. The woman also that travaileth, *verse 1, 2*, and bringeth forth and fleeth to the wilderness, is still the same woman, Spouse to Christ, and Mother to His seed, during that time, and also after the expiring of these days.

effect, deny Christ to be incarnate in the flesh by their **Mon-  
struosity**, resting upon good works, and upon the like of these;  
whereby they give not their testimony to Christ, nor have in  
the profession that is proper and suitable to true Professors;  
nor will be found therein approved, as having the same hope of  
God in their words; they are without respect both to Law  
and Gospel, giving each of them their own due. This was fully  
filled when the devil for himself, by the bringing forth of Anti-  
christ to public view, to make havoc of the Church; then  
history whereof followeth in this next Chapter more par-  
ticularly.

*Catholic in the Church.*

This consideration sheweth the continuance of the Church and Ordinances, and how that series is not interrupted by Antichrist sitting down in the Temple, 2<sup>d</sup> Thess. 2. but it continueth to be the Church, notwithstanding, and after his removal is to be acknowledged for the same Church, that it was before he did lay himself down therein.



is itself as the whole : and so is constituted of all these parts, which visible professors are Members of that Church, as parts thereof : of those all men are of this world : Besides what is said, it is to say, that a Church, which is not a Church, should suffer (if it be) not more or less visible, have seed, be fed, &c. The Church alone prove it clearly to hold out the Catholick visible Church as an integral body and society, whereof all particular professors are parts.

Neither hath this been accounted strange, nor in the Church ; for, before Christ, this Church was one ; and after his coming, her unity were dissolved, Then she were not the same Church, or Woman, but many Churches, or Women, that one were many, the primitive times knew no mids ; but the Church, and these that were without the same, who were baptized, were added to one Church, *Acts. 2. v. 41.* And these who were rejected, were cast out of this one Church, *Joh. 2.* Upon this ground all the Apostles but fed one Church, when they fed Christs Lambs any where. Upon this the general Councils are founded, and there is nothing else and more ordinary than such phrases, as, *the unity of the Church, the praying for the Church, &c. visiting of the Church, persecuting of the Church, &c.* mentioned both among the Fathers and later Divines ; yet none will think that any particular Church is meant, or that the visible Church is not intended. Hence the Novatians, Donatists, and others of old, and the Anabaptists of late, have been by all the Orthodox branded with this, that they rent and separated from the Church, which certainly can be understood of no particular Congregation, and how often is the same said of our blessed Lord spoken of, thereby to shew how they conceive the unity of the Church visible, which ought not to be rent, being by him appointed to be one intire piece : yea, this form of speech, is not abhorred by many judicious men of the congregational way, and judicious Aines (whom the Learned *Hurdian* cites) is express for a Catholick Church, that is, *integral and universal.* We will find also the most solid writer *Calvin* of New England, own that and assert the contrary to be a principle destructive to rule, *Antipedobaptism, Chap. 5. v. 5.* as the whole : so doth *Cotton* *Santa* *6. v. 30.* and *Robertson* appositely maketh the *Garden*, *(Chap. 6. v. 2)* to be the Catholick Church, and the *Garden* to be particular Churches comprehended under the same, and as parts thereof : though all these, and the Catholick Church be not in themselves different parties, but she existeth in them as the world existeth in particular nations and persons, there is no reason therefore to brand this as a principle of Bopery, and this being both the universal judgement and practice of all Divines hitherto, to account the visible Church to be one : the expressions that are in their writings are to be interpreted, thereby, as being intended against the Popish Catholicity ; which we also oppose, and the following words in our hands do destroy : and they dispute that the Catholick Church is not visible, that is, either not glorious and of great extent, or not necessarily alway to be seen or acknowledged as such : Therefore (say they) she is *invisible*, though not alway *visa* ; but they do not contradict this, that the visible Church hath an unity in it and is one body, although many of them do account that to be the Church, but improperly, and the regenerate Elect only properly to be the Church ; and this is as much against particular Churches as this general Church, because they look upon the invisible Church, as that which is the object of many promises, applied by Papists to their Catholick, or rather their particular Church absurdly ; and there is odds to say the Catholick Church is visible, as they understood it, and to say the visible Church is one, which is the thing we plead for. We gather that this Catholick Church is the first Church and Fountain from which all particular Churches do flow, and of whose nature they do partake ; for, she is the Mother, and

they are her children, which doth demonstrate the same ; she is the main body of the Church, and they are the high branches forth and exaltation thereof, into Churches as they partake from her ; and as much as she hath given unto them, with herself. This first Gospel Church is in which the Lord sows the gospel seed, as it were, travaileth and begetteth more and (as the Prophet saith, *Isa. 49. 20.*) when the place of meeting becometh too narrow, then is it subdivided, as diverse branches spring from one root ; and when it encreaseth in number or distance, accordingly this springeth out still the broader, as branches when they extend themselves from the root, or shut forth new branches, yet is the root still one ; or, as a family encreasing, must have diverse beds, and possibly diverse tables and diverse rooms, yet still is the family one and the mother of the rest ; so is it here : so the root is one, and out of it many branches, and not the branches the root, which would be inferred if particular Churches were first. Thus one is entered into the Catholick Church, as to the Mother, when he may be no member of a particular Church : and if we look at the properties and advantages that are attributed to the visible Church, they will still agree primarily to the Catholick Church, as to have good and bad in her, which can hardly be said alway of all particular individual Congregations, and when the Churches condition is reckoned pure, or impure, quiet or perfected, few or numerous, it respecteth principally the Catholick Church, and goes upon consideration thereof, which sheweth that the Church so considered is most essentially the Church of Christ. Neither ought it to move any, that should be objected, that Presbyterians are before Synods, and Congregations before the because Members that constitute the one, derive commission from the others, and therefore Congregations must be first, as States are before a Parliament or Kingdom made up of them, because they constitute such. This (I say) hath no weight in it, because the Catholick Church hath not her being from particular Churches, but doth descend (as is said) from the preceding generation, till it come to the first Church that ever was, from which all that followed were derived, and did extend themselves accordingly as they encreased, as hath been said, and Adams family is once Gods Church, thereafter Noahs, when Abrahams is especially adopted, after that at Christs coming the *Gavails* are ingrafted in that stock, and the Ordinances that came from Zion prevailed ; and that not to constitute different Churches, but to encrease and enlarge that one Church, which, for its accommodation, might have its diverse rooms, but be still one family : the Gospel Church therefore hath its being from the Church before Christ, and particular Congregations have their being from it as parts of the same. The similitudes hold not for, before there be a General Assembly, there is an unity of the Catholick Church, which warranteth her Members to convene in one, and Commissioners for to instruct for that end, otherwise they could not do it, even as the Kingdom as such is before a Parliament met, and hath an unity before Cities choise : and although Cities, considered abstractly, may be before such an union, because the union may depend upon voluntary submission ; yet, if they be considered as parts of that Kingdom, it is supposed to be first and to communicate to them such privileges ; and therefore they are free parts of such a body ; not because they give the whole a being, but because they have a being from it : so here, particular Congregations cannot be considered as parts of the whole, but the whole must be supposed to be first, which on such occasions are bound to concur in general ; although sometimes in the particular it may be free whether to join with such or such a particular Church, or any other, from which, many useful points touching the external order, discipline and Government of the Church will follow, and as the right understanding of the nature of the Covenant of grace, and



conduce exceedingly to the clearing of the Gospel-truths; so the right understanding of this unity of the Catholick Church, hath great influence upon the upraking of what concerneth her outward administration in order and discipline and that communion which is amongst Ministers and Members of the visible

Church, whereof somewhat is said, *Chap. 2. ver. 1.* To this purpose may be observed, that famous *Augustine* did long ago take the defence of *Ticonius*, writing against the *Donatists* upon this same subject, as may be seen in his writings against *Permenianus*, lib. 1. cap. 10.

# LECTURE I.

## CHAP. XIII.

Verf. 1. **A**ND I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads, and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemie.

2. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

3. And I saw one of his heads, as it were wounded to death, and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.



He right understanding of this Chapter is of great concernment to the understanding of this prophesie: it hath such difficulty in it, that by some it is accounted as *crux interpretum*. The difficulty is not (even almost with Papists) whether the *Roman* state be designed here or not; or, concerning the beasts, if by one of them Antichrist be holden forth: both these are palpable and certain, this being compared with the 17. Chap. The difficulty lieth in these two, 1. To that time, state or head of the *Roman* Empire they relate? 2. If different states be meant by these two beasts? Or, if one Antichrist, as diversly considered, be set out by these shapes? because on doth not sufficiently paint him out, who standeth both in a Civil and Ecclesiastick relation, so that now Satan, (as it were) being first spoiled of Temporal Authority in his lieutenant the heathen Emperour, and being also disappointed of his second design of drowning the Church by errors, setteth himself to hasten up a new Kingdom or Deputy, but in another shape, that by joyning both violence and deceit in him together, he may bring to pass, what these, being essayed separately, did not effectuate. So that this is looked on as the product of the Dragons third design, wherein his uttermost skill kytheth, and the greatest strength of his Kingdom lyeth; which design is answerably described in a double type. The 1. shewing what really Antichrist is, to whom he succeedeth, of whom he hath his power, where he sitteth, and to what height he cometh, &c. The 2. how he appeareth, what way he carried on and brought about that design, and what weapons and pretexts were abused for that end. This we conceive shortly to be the scope and drift of both these types: for more clear understanding whereof, we shall premit some general propositions, the particulars whereof will appear more in opening this and the 17. Chapter.

*Proposition 1.* It is ordinary to the Prophets, especially to *Daniel*, to set out temporal Monarchies, by great beasts, as *Chap. 7. & 8.* And these beasts do not hold forth individual persons, but a successive series of the same line on that throne; and it is usual in this prophesie to borrow types from him; only sometimes that which is spoken in the Old Testament of temporal enemies or straits of the Church, is applied to spiritual

and covered enemies, as many things literally agreeing to *Antiochus* are applied to Antichrist, and things literally true of *Pharaoh* are applied to the devil. So by a *Beast* here may be meant a State of great power and violence against the Church though not in or by a single person in one generation executed, but for a long time, by a series of one combined body successively under one head. Thus must be understood that of the Churches suffering under the Dragon formerly, his first Deputy the heathen Empire and Emperour being understood thereby, as it was one body, though under diverse individual Emperors successively.

*Propos. 2.* Sometimes one state, thing or person, will be set out in Scripture by diverse types and beasts: so, *Dan. 7.* the *Persian* Empire is set forth by a Bear, the *Grecian* by a Leopard.

In the 8. the *Persian* by a Ram, and the *Grecian* by a He-goat. See *Chap. 7.* the *Seleucides* kingdom (though but a branch of the *Grecian*) is set out by a beast, as different from the other wholly, because in somethings different. Which saith, that though the types be different, yet the party signified may be one, considered in diverse respects. In which sense (*Chap. 17.*) this same Antichrist is called the eight beast, and yet really there also but one of the seven and the seventh, though in appearance, or upon distinct consideration, different from the seventh, *verse 11.*

*Proposition 3.* More particularly, the state or power designed here, is the state and power which hath *Rome* for the seat of it, as the Metropolis of its Kingdom during its standing, as it was of the heathen Emperours before; for, the Dragon placeth his Deputy in that same seat where the former sat before, *verse 2.*

Beside, this seat is particularly described (*Chap. 17.*) in three things,

1. In its natural situation for that time, *seven mountains*, *verse 9.*
2. In its politick Government, to wit, seven sorts, counting in this beast.
3. In its present Authority, in *Johns* time, over the Kings of the earth, *ver. 18.* And what is and hath been the state which hath had and hath *Rome* for its seat this long time, is not hard to determine.

*Proposition*

*Propos. 4.* By this beast is not set out the Roman Empire simply, as under any head, but as under its seventh and last head or government, whatever it be: for although the beast have in all seven heads, as it is considered in its whole body; yet seeing these heads are successive, and the removing of one is the inferring of another, & *contra*, it is to be looked on at one time as under one head only: Therefore that which was in John's time being the sixth, *Rev. 17.* and this beast having the sixth wounded and healed again before he exerce his power, It must follow, that it is here the Roman Empire under its seventh and last government. Hence the difference is remarkable between the beast here and *Chap. 12.* although it set out the same Empire with seven heads and ten horns; yet, there the heads are crowned, and the horns were not, because the *Cesars* then reigning kepted their power, the Provinces were governed by their Deputies: here the horns are crowned, to show, that the Instruments acted by this beast, have sovereign power, which is more clearly expounded, *Chap. 17.* However, this is the Roman Empire, or that Government of it, which is the seventh. All the effects here agree to the beast after its head is healed, and after it hath gotten the throne and seat of the Dragon. This beast therefore is compleatly described to shew in what sense this last succeedeth to the former: but that of wounding of the head and healing it again (which must be the head then in being) is to direct us to what state or government of that Empire or series we are to look for the fulfilling of these effects, and which ought to be pointed at as great deputy and lieutenant of the devil, to wit, in its again revived and healed condition, which is the last or seventh Government.

*Propos. 5.* We would distinguish this beasts beginning to arise, from his publick appearing; because they are in themselves different events, and have different times: and we conceive it is the publick appearing and manifesting of this to the world that is pointed at here, which differeth from its begun underhand working: even as the Churches begun flight is different in its rise from its hid private condition at the lowest; so this being contemporary to that, must have that same consideration; for, as he riseth, she fleeth, and her flight encreaseth with his rising, like light and darknesse. His beginning will appear to be, 1. after outward persecution; for, the Dragon giveth him that seat and quiteth the chair to him: and so this cannot be the Heathen persecuting Emperours, but some succeeding them, and that immediately; for, there is no vacancy of this throne, but the one resigneth it to the other. 2. It beginneth as soon as the womans flight, that is, immediately after Satans dethroning, he seeketh to advance this beast, and piece and piece he groweth from that time; for (*vers. 5.*) his power and commission is for the same forty two moneths, and the time being alike, the period of the close is alike (for when the beast beginneth to be destroyed, her prophets put off their sackcloth, *vers. 11.* and 16.) Therefore the beginning of both must be together also. Again, this sheweth it is no French nor German Emperours that can be meant by this; for they had not their rise so soon; for this will be about the 300. year, as is said before. 3. The manifesting of this beast will be found to be after the devils disappointment of his design to drown the woman (when these grosse heresies prevailed not to gain his end) and also to be contemporary with the healing of the deadly wound which the sixth head had gotten; yea, to be the very healing of it in Romes recovering a publick Court and Authority by the papacy, which by the *Cesars* and Emperours their becoming Christian and removing their Court from it, had left. It received again in papacie an head, and that same superscription of blasphemy on it, which it had under its former masters, which will fall in about the 600. year, or a little after when both the peaceable possessing of Rome by Popes and inbringing of Idolatry made forward together. Beside, in this

state the horns are crowned, which from *Chap. 17. 12.* relateth to the erection of new Kingdoms not then in being, which sheweth, that the manifestation of Antichrist and the erection of Kingdoms out of the Empire must go together, and that it is his manifestation which is intended here.

Out of which Propositions we may draw three Conclusions.

*Conclusion 1.* It is not any state or branch of the civil Roman Empire that is holden forth here, 1. not the Heathenish state, as is said. 2. not the Grecian Emperours, which had their seat at Constantinople; (the first Christian Emperour had in Gods wisdom transferred his Court thither, that so this beast might have the fairer access to the Dragons throne) for, these had not their seat at Rom. 2. They continued not during these forty two moneths, but are gone. 3. There was not alway so good friendship between them and the Popes as between these two beasts here, the Emperours being alwayes jealous of them, and sometimes by their lieutenants afflicting and straitning them, and they again, by Excommunications, casting down some of these Emperours who were violent opposers of Image-worship, and of praying, &c. unto Saints departed, as *Leo Isaurus*, and *Constantinus*, *Copronymus*, and others, called fighters against Images by them. 3. This beast appeareth not till the wound be healed. Now, in the Heathen Emperours time it was but hurt, in these Emperours at Constantinople their beginning, it was not perfectly healed till a time thereafter. Neither can it be the succession of French Emperours brought in by *Stephanus* the third after *Carolus Martellus*, to wit, *Pipinus*, *Carolus Magnus*, *Lodovicus Pius*, &c. who were called to defend the Empire, partly against the Goths and Lombards, who then trode on Italy; partly, for restraining the insolency of the *Exarchs* of Ravenna, who, being Deputies to the Grecian Emperour, pillaged and spoiled Italy exceedingly; for these Emperours rise will not come up to this beasts rise. Their rise was about the 750. or 766. Neither is it of that continuance, nor will the rest of the characters agree to it of having that seat, &c. Beside, that Empire is by many counted a special favour of God to this part of the world, (*Pencrus in vita Caroli Magni*) which could never be said of this beasts rise. The like reasons also will strike against the German Emperours, or that elective succession brought in by *Otho* the third, and *Carolus* the fourth, who may be chief horns of this beast, crowned by him to execute his decrees, and may be amongst these who give their power to this beast, but cannot be the beast himself.

*Conclusion 2.* By this first beast then is understood Antichrist in his Kingdom, which appeareth by all the characters given, 1. He succeedeth the Dragon in his seat. 2. His rise, reign, and continuance agree to these forty two moneths desolate condition of the Church ending and beginning with it. He is worshipped not civilly only (that worship is no fault in it self) but religiously, as no Emperour was; he hath absolute dominion and taketh a title to him over all Kindreds, Tongues, &c. Their submission to him is voluntary and with admiration, which was never to any civil state; he hath crowned horns and Kings under him who reverence him; which will more particularly appear in opening the words: for, all spoken here, agreeth to one beast, and in one state or condition, to wit, under the last head when the wound which the sixth got was healed, (things to come being represented to John as past) the beast thus healed in his head is admired, worshipped, followed, &c. to him power over the Saints is given (alluding as is ordinary in the Antichrists case to *Antiochus*, *Dan.*) so either Antichrist is no head of this beast, or he is set out by this beast who this long continueth, and in whom and by whom the Dragon is again worshipped by the men of the earth: all which can agree to no other. To speak in short then, here is set out the Roman Empire as antichristian or headed with Antichrist, having now the sixth head which was wounded by the throw-



ing down of Heathenish Idolatry again healed by the papacies becoming the seventh; (for, there are but seven) and to this Empire as under this head agreeth all that is spoken unto here, considering it as representing that same civil state, now the seventh time carrying another head of blasphemy, yet again repeated under another type, that it may be known not to be the same head (though on the same beast) with that which was wounded, nor of the same kind altogether with the former.

It is true this is generally otherwayes expounded by learned Interpreters, whereof some do expound this first beast to hold forth the Roman civil Empire become Christian; others understand it of the complex body of Kings arising out of the ruines of the Empire (as *Mede* calleth it *universitas regum & incolarum*) and so they distinguish this beast as representing some civil power from the two horned beast following, which to them is Antichrist and an Ecclesiastick state; yet, upon the matter, there will be found no great difference: for even these acknowledge this civil power (whether consisting in Emperours or Kings) to be acted and made use, of by this Ecclesiastick beast, which is the same, upon the matter, that we say, to wit, that the head acting these horns is the Antichrist; and therefore the beast is to get its denomination from the head whereby the rest are swayed. Beside, if we look narrowly to this description, we may well call Emperours, (as they now are) or Kings, horns of this beast, but cannot account them the beast it self, but as they are united in and under him; for, the beast here, is that which supporteth the whore, *Chap. 17.* which is acknowledged by the same forenamed Author to be the Ecclesiastick beast. Again, this beast having its beginning immediately after the close of Heathenish persecution, that can neither be said of the Roman Empire or of that universality of Kings. We may add, that the horns of this beast, being crowned (that is, having supream civil power) cannot be thought subject to any other civil power: and it is clear here, that the worshippers of this beast are of equal extent with these who bear this mark, and are contradistinguished from the hundreth forty four thousand that were sealed, whereby all Papists are included as under his power: and seeing this can agree to no Emperour (whose dominion is not of such extent) so neither can this beast be applied to him. Again, it cannot be the universality of Kings, for they are horns acted by this beast, and so may be distinguished from him, as we will often find them, as, (*Chap. 17.*) these horns are turned to hate the whore, which was supported by this beast, *Chap. 19.* this beast is cast into the lake with the false prophet, (and therefore must be understood of this first beast according to that learned Author) yet can it not be said, that all these Kings or Emperours go to the pit, as if none of them could remain after Antichrist, especially considering the prophesie of the Lords making some of these Kings, who were formerly horns of this beast, to become instruments of his vengeance against the whore. We conclude it therefore, as most safe and consistent with this prophesie, to expound this first beast of Antichrist, who acteth these horns, and to whom the Kings of the earth willingly gave their power, and so to be applied to the Pope and his Kingdom, supposing him to be Antichrist.

*Conclus. 3.* It remaineth therefore that these two beasts must be, upon the matter, one; the last holding forth no different state, but the same which the former held forth, in a different notion. Therefore there is no particular description of the parts of it, or of its rise in respect of time and continuance, but it becometh one in all these with the former. Therefore in this Chapter there is but one name, one character, and one beast or number alway spoken of; yea, they have one Sea, commission, &c. and are designed by one beast, *Chap. 11. vers. 7.* Spoken of as one *Chap. 17.* yea, the woman that is said to sit on the beast, *vers. 13.* is called this very City or

Empire, *Rom. vers. 18.* The woman certainly is the antichristian Church, but that woman (*vers. 18.*) is not a distinct government or state from that civil state, or from Antichrists state, but that same supported by its civil power, Therefore they are one. Thus we see every one of these conclusions do follow each other: if it be not the civil Empire which is typified by the first beast, it must be Antichrists, and so both one; for, the last is he. We may add, that in the Chapters following, when ever Antichrists diminishing is spoken of, or the destroying of his Kingdom, it is done under the name of the beast, and but as one, as may appear by these and the like phrases, *who worship him, who had gotten victory over him, his seat, Chap. 16.* which by all is expounded to be Rome. Therefore these two must be one, and such an one as hath one seat at Rome over all Nations with a slavish, superstitious, or rather idolatrous dependance on him: and therefore when he is here set out, and elsewhere through this Book, by diverse representations, as a woman carried by the beast, and false prophet, It is not as if they were two things, but diverse types setting out one diversly considered, to set out Antichrists two swords Civil and Ecclesiastick, or his twofold means he maketh use of, to wit, power and violence, as a beast; hypocrisie and dissembling, as a false prophet: for, it cannot be thought, that one can be of such finesse and likenesse to Antichrist, in all things as this beast rising with him, reigning with him, falling and going to the pit with him, especially seeing two heads are not consistent together, as upon one seat at the same time, as hath been said. This is acknowledged by *Bellar. lib. 3. de Pont. cap. 15. Idem Antichristus per duas bestias exprimitur; per unam, ratione regie potentie & tyrannidis, qua coget homines violenter; per alteram, ratione magicæ artis, qua callide homines seducit*, that is, The same Antichrist is expressed by the two beasts; by the one, because of his kingly power and tyrannie, whereby he shall force men violently; by the other, because of his magick art, whereby cunningly he shall seduce men. And he alleageth *Rupertus* for the Author of this exposition. And, *ibid.* calleth Antichrist King of the Roman Empire, but not under the name of Emperour. This also agreeth with the titles ordinarily assumed by the Pope, who is a good Prince, whereby he exerciseth temporal armes, and a holy Pope, whereby he is armed with spiritual weapons. See the history of the Council of *Trent*, *pag. 37.*

Concerning the Image, mentioned *vers. 14.* and *15.* we also premit, that by it, is understood no meer civil power, seeing it receiveth such worship, and that universally; but it is the same power or state here typified by the first beast or Antichrists temporal Kingdom under the same notion, as it is described here. It is called, 1. the image of this beast, which was wounded, because although it be not in all things the very same Empire, yet doth it so exactly represent the former Roman state, that it may well be called his image, as if a pattern had been taken from that. 2. It is called also his Image, that is, the Image of the two horned beast, because it is his creature, and is brought forth by him, and may be claimed as his, when it is brought forth; and therefore although it be the Image of the first and second beast, yet in diverse respects: wherein also we may conclude, that by both these beasts, and also by the Image here mentioned, is understood the same Antichrist or antichristian Kingdom. This introduction hath been the more largely insisted on, both because exceeding useful for understand the prophesie, and also because difficult, and by Diverse otherwayes applied.

We come then to the Chapter, which hath two parts. The first setteth out Antichrist in his power, outward glory and cruelty, as in one series with the heads of that beast, and as now being that same seat and power, but under another head. This part of Antichrists description is begun at, 1. Because this is indeed

indeed the thing which he is, appear what he will. 2. Because temporal greatness was the first bait that took with the Pope, and brought forth other corruptions as they might advance that; this is the end. 3. Because, in this respect, by his power, fear and predecessors, he is best discerned and known what he is and who he is. 4. Especially he is here looked on as an head or kind of government of a body politic, whereof some were already past: he is described with respect to that series as he succeedeth these who went before him in that same seat, The Roman Empire here, under the first beast, being considered as with so many heads whereof he is the last. In the second vision he appeareth without respect to seat or succession, but as in himself; and so is described. In a word, in the first vision, to *vers. 11.* he is holden forth as a temporal idolatrous Monarch, having the seat of the Dragon in possession.

The second part of the Chapter, (from *vers. 11.*) setteth out the means and ways how he came to that temporal greatness, and how he entertaineth it, by spiritual weapons, miracles and censures, with hypocrisie, drawing all men to give him that voluntary adoration which he desired. In the first beast, is set forth the nature of the antichristian Kingdom and power compleatly with the supream head and Kings acting under him: In the last, is set forth especially the head himself. This being compared with *Chap. 19. 20.* will be more clear. Again, for the first part, 1. Antichrist is typically described, to *v. 9.* 2. Some plain Doctrines and uses are laid down, *vers. 9, 10.*

Before his description a word is prefixed, *I stood on the sea shore, or the sand.* It is to shew what posture John was in when he saw this. He was put in that conveniency, that now when the devil goeth to renew his war he may see what it produceth. He saw it at no great distance, but was placed commodiously to discern the rise of this monstrous beast. This word kniteth not only the series of the vision with the close of the former Chapter, but also timeth the matter, to wit, the publick appearing of this beast, as a fruit of Satans third design after the storm of gross heresies by the first four trumpets is over.

To come particularly to the description; it is in many parts or respects, 1. Its original or rise, is, *from, or, out of the sea.* By *Sea* we understand a low base beginning, rising out of the commotions of a troubled world, and coming to an height by temporal changes and afflictions on the Empire, yet indeed proceeding out of the bottomless pit, as *Chap. 9.* which is that same to ascend out of the sea, save that this may serve to clear how subservient the tossings and shakings of the Empire were to its rise. 2. If we take *Sea*, as it was *Chap. 5.* it will be a rising out of the bulk of Church-men and an ascending above them, alluding in general to *Dan. 7.* and 8.

2. This beasts rise is set out actively; it was not raised up nor exalted as lawful powers are, but it raised it self up and by its own working wrought it self out of its own station to such a height.

3. This rise is palpable, *I saw him rise*: not that he was not working and rising before, but that he, who insensibly under the great confusions of the Empire had been settling his own throne, now he bringeth his power from the sea to land, as a settled thing, owning it and appearing in it.

Secondly, After the rise is described, there is given a general character of him (*vers. 1.*) in three things, 1. He had seven heads; not together, but successively, seven kinds of Governments, though the seventh was not come, *Chap. 17.* In John's time, that is, the Roman Empire, having in all seven sundry Governments, to wit, 1. Kings. 2. Consuls. 3. Tribuni. 4. Dictators. 5. Decemviri. 6. Cæsars, or Emperours, who were then present. This seventh, who is called the eighth, was not then come. This will be more clear on *Chap. 17.*

1. He hath *ten horns*, that is, so many, or possibly indefinitely, many Kings, who when John wrote this, had not received their power, but now at this beasts rise had obtained it; so Antichrists appearing goeth alongst with or after the Empire is dispersed in several Kingdoms. The red Dragon hath these two characters, *Chap. 12. 3.* yet, with these two differences, 1. He looketh more red-like and appeareth cruel. This beast was not so bloody at the first, but, (*Chap. 17.*) it hath a scarlet colour. 2. There the heads were crowned, here the horns and not the heads: This is to shew, that now these ten Kings had gotten their power, *Chap. 17.* but withal were made use of by this head, as the other made use of them, before they got their Crowns: whereby it is clear that the Roman civil Empire, as under this beast, is considered as different from it self under the Dragon. Compare this with *vers. 12. Chap. 17.* The third character, is, that all the heads have the name or names of blasphemy on them. Blasphemy, is three ways fallen into, 1. When something derogatory to the holy and excellent Nature of God is ascribed to Him, suppose to say He repented, lied, or when there is any sinful apprehension that He was weary, sickly, faint, finit, &c. 2. When some of His excellencies belonging to Him, are denied, as to say He is not omnipotent, just, infinit, &c. 3. When something proper and peculiar to the infinite God is ascribed to a creature which is not God, as when an Angel is said to be omnipotent; so said the Jews when they mistook Christ, He blasphemed; because He forgave sins, which none can do but God only, and so did make himself God. A name of blasphemy, is any usurped title inferring one of these three, especially the last: many of their Emperours did foolishly require divine honour; and what business Caius made to get his Image put in the Temple at Jerusalem, Josephus reporteth, *Antiq. lib. 18. cap. 11.* In a word, all these heads were Idolaters, blaspheming the true God, worshipping Idols, giving what is due to Him to creatures; yea, taking it to themselves to Heathen Idolatry, so did the six former heads, so shall the seventh do: the Idolatry whereof was spoken to, *Chap. 9. 20.* None taketh on him and hath attributed to him what is due to God in Titles, power of Dispensations, religious Worship, obeying of His Commands more than he who exalteth himself above all that is called God. For the Titles and Scriptures peculiar to God and Christ, arrogated by him and attributed to him, see *Bill. de Conciliis* and *pres. ad libros de pontif.* By which it appeareth, that this seventh head of papacy is immediately linked with the Dragons fall, there being no head thus characterized till his rise.

This beast is further described (*vers. 2.*) in his parts and commission. His parts are described in three similitudes, 1. His likeness was as a leopard; that was his shape. A Leopard or Panther, is called loving and a friend to all creatures, save the Dragon, so saith *Isidorus*; *Franciscus* joyneth the Hyena and the Cock, and calleth him animal *ferocissimum & astutum*, *Hist. animal. cap. 9. pag. 60.* Beside that he is bountiful and not terrible as the Dragon. By this the devil sheweth his subtilty, choosing that shape to appear in wherein folks would least suspect him. This beast is famous for these three, 1. Swiftness, *Habak. 1. 8.* for this the Grecian was compared to him. 2. Cruelty, *Hosai 5. 14.* 3. Subtilty, *Jer. 5. 6.* All agree here.

2. His feet are like a bears. Thus was the Persian, *Dan. 7.* with three ribs in his teeth. By this, cruelty is holden forth and strength, or the exercising of cruelty by force, not unagreeable to this Antichrist, as cruel as ever the Persian was against the people of God.

3. His mouth as a lions mouth: partly, to shew his rapacity towards others; partly, to shew his insolency and audacity against God in wicked bold decrees: in which respect, the Babylonian Monarchy is compared to a Lion, *Dan. 7.* This



Lions mouth is indeed (*vers. 11.*) the Dragons mouth; and there is allusion to these three beasts in this one, to shew, that one could not set forth such a monster; and that this which is meant here, is some monstrous brood partaking of something of the cruel nature of all other tyrants, and in some things going beyond and differing from them all.

4. The beast is set forth in his predecessor and author, that is, *the Dragon*, who loveth this beast so well, and layeth so much weight on his greatness, that now, the power which he usurped in the world by Heathen Emperours being ranvered and removed, he constituteth this beast his universal vicar, as he is called, *Chap. 9.* the Angel and prime Deputy of the bottomless pit; and accordingly he authorizeth and invests him in that office by his gift and donation in three steps, 1. *He gave him*, that is, as he offered to Christ all the world, or so far as he could reach, he stretcheth himself to advance him by giving him his power; partly, furnishing him with lying miracles, so he cometh after the working of Satan, 2 *Thess. 2. 9.* partly, committing to him and employing for him all his forces and armies; his might to the uttermost was engaged to support Antichrist his Deputy. 2. *He gave him his seat*, that is, *Rome*, where he before by the Heathen Emperour held his throne. The Emperour now is laid by, as such, and this seat made vacant for the Pope. This is the seat, as is clear, *Chap. 17. ult.* this is called Satans throne in an eminent way, because from it, he gave out his orders, &c. as is spoken in part of *Pergamos*, *Chap. 2.* 3. *He gave him great authority*, that is, not as if ever his dominion on that seat by any prescription of time could be lawful, seeing it riseth from this ground of the devils grant who liath none to give; But it implieth two things, 1. That by the devils instigation he should venditate and give out himself to have a large authority and power committed to him, even such ample large commissions and power as the like were never heard of; his triple Crown reacheth to command heaven, by giving orders to the Angels; and earth, by disposing of all the Kingdoms of it; Hell and Purgatory, by bringing thence and sending thither whom he pleaseth, and at what price he pleaseth, without any control, so that none can say, what doest thou? he is only countable to the Dragon who commissioneth him. This is clear from Popes practices and their Schoolmens writings in defence of his power. 2. That by that same mean never was any authority so much revered, adored and obeyed as this blasphemous usurpation of the Popes should be, witness the general enslaving of the world to him so long: what pinnances and submissions and pains have been gone about by great Emperours and Kings, even to the laying of their neck under his feet, to be trodden on by him? Many instances and examples are of it.

Before he go on to describe the practice of this beast, he putteth in a word (*vers. 3.*) concerning the wounding and healing of one of the heads of this beast, and the effect of it, to shew that what is spoken of this beast, belongeth to it allanerly under its last policy or seventh head; and the healing of this head, is the very ground and rise of this wondering. For understanding this, ye must consider two things, 1. concerning the story in fact. 2. concerning the phrase of this Book. 1. For matter of fact, as ye have heard, *Rome* had seven sorts of Governments, (including the Pope) all Idolaters; The sixth, to wit, Heathen Emperours, was then when *John* wrote, it was the immediate foregoing head to this seventh. By *Constantine* and other Emperours this Heathenish Religion was altered to Christian, and the seat of the civil Empire transported to *Constantinople*, so that *Rome* seemed to want an head, especially an head that had blasphemy on it, till by the Popes stepping up at *Rome* both were helped. 2. Consider, that when this Revelation speaketh of the Empire, it speaketh of it with respect to its Religion, and as it was the seat of the Dragons ex-

exercising power in all these Governments, even as under the sixth seal a change of Religion in the world is set out by types, as if the world were changed; so here the wounding of a head, is not a cutting off of Emperours simply, but their ceasing to be a head to that beast, and to be blasphemous and persecuting as before; for, they are not heads to it simply, but as having on them a name of blasphemy; for, they hold of the Dragon: and this healed head is his creature, *vers. 4.* and he is worshipped in it. This cannot be said of civil Authority in it self, which is Gods Ordinance. The devil then must have a special hand in this cure, so the wounding or slaying of a head deadly, will not infer the ceasing of that Government simply, but to be such as it was, as in other visions and changes in the worlds passing away, &c. which holdeth out, not its annihilating, but its ceasing to be such. See *Chap. 6. 13.* and *Chap. 8.*

Add, that this wound is not to be given to the head after this beasts arising, but before it; yea, the healing of this is the same with this beasts rising: for, all he doth, he doth it after it is made whole, Then he is admired, then he fighteth with the Saints. This head then that is wounded, is that which was in *John's* time, to wit, Heathen Emperours. It is here particularly said to be wounded, which is not said between the succession of any other two heads, because they succeeding one to another, their Idolatry was not hurt. But here, when Heathenish Emperours were cast out, Heathenish Idolatry was cast out with them. Idolatry before kept always its room in all the heads equally, here it is degraded. 2. It is for a time interrupted before this head be again publick, to wit, between the altering of Heathenish Idolatry and the publick appearing of Popes. Therefore it appeareth desperately wounded, rather now than between any other heads before, where the interruption between them was not so desperate and palpable. 3. At other times, no question, the civil state of the Empire got many wounds by many invasions and invaders; but the Dragon, who is still here represented as chief through all the heads, got never such a wound. Shortly, this third verse containeth three things, 1. The heads wounding. 2. Its healing. 3. Its effect on the world. The head that is wounded is the Heathen *Cesars*, or Emperours; for, five were past, the seventh was not till the wound was healed. Therefore it was the sixth then present which was wounded. This wound is in two things, 1. A deadly stroke upon Idolatry, so as it was (*Chap. 6.*) under the sixth seal, the Idolatrous body was slain and overturned by it; that same may be said of the blasphemous head. 2. By an hudge eclipsing of the chief seat of this Empire, by the Emperours removing his Court to *Constantinople*, whereby the glory of that city was diminished; So, when *John* speaketh of this wound, I saw (saith he) an hudge Idolatrous beast with seven successive Idolatrous Governments (counting both what was past and what was to come) and I saw the sixth of them thus wounded and that deadly, 1. Because it was a great stroke it got, and none would have thought that after these two *Rome* should have had again an Idolatrous Government in pomp; and yet, 2. but wounded as it were to death, because I saw the devil after recover that ground another way which he lost by this.

2. This wound was healed: the curer is afterward pointed at, *v. 4. the Dragon*: it is a birth of his, that is, the bringing forth the seventh head, to wit, papacy, whereby that Beast, or *Rome*, recovered both its former losses with advantage. 1. By the Popes they recovered Idolatry: for, if the want of that is the wound, the restoring of that is the cure, and it was not done till it was done by the Popes. This was touched, *Chap. 9. 20.* For the healing of this head, is not the restoring of the same head, and name of blasphemy which was, but it is the in-bringing of another to succeed that; for, the healed head continueth during the fourty two months that Antichrist reigneth, and the horns

are crowned: Therefore it cannot be the restoring again either of Emperours or Heathenish Idolatry, but of that which succeeded these; otherwise there would be no time for the seventh; or, two behoved to be together: but it is called a healing in respect of the Idolatry that was wounded, the Empire being still safe. This is healed not only by bringing in Idolatry, and yet not the same, but one exceeding like it; so that what was given to devils directly, is now given mediately by Saints, Angels and Images to them, and all their superstitious Ceremonies and Idolatrous Temples are professedly transferred from one Idolatry to another. But secondly, also, by this *Rome*, the seat (almost like to a widow before this) now received a Court, Popes, Cardinals, and her solitariness was helped, and she looketh out again as majestically and commander-like by this head as by any other. That this is the healing here understood, appeareth by the effects, 1. The admiration that then followed in the World, and the thanks they (in effect) gave the devil for this service, as generally better content with this than with any other head that ever was before.

The particular effect in this verse, is, *All the world wondered after the beast*. It is more to wonder after than at the beast. Here beginneth the effects of his enchantment on the World after this healing which was not before. 2. This admiration after the beast, is more particularly set forth afterward: It implieth, 1. an unexpected amazement, as at the seeing of something they had not seen or thought to see so soon: and certainly the wicked world could not have expected again an Idolatrous head so soon. 2. It importeth a sort of Divine or Religious reverence or doting on the beast superstitiously; for, it is after the beast: which is clear afterward, as holding out an estimation of some Religious thing in this head (who is called *Christ's Vicar*) more then in any which went before; which cannot agree to a civil state. 3. It importeth a willingness or gladfomness in the doing of this, as affected or delighted with it: It is otherways expressed by enchanting the inhabitants of the earth; mens wicked nature, that loveth whoring from God, now welcometh exceedingly this corrupt beast, and submitteth to him, and drinketh in in a deluded way his fornications willingly, where we have an embleme of mans nature. 2. The parties admiring, are, *all the world*, that is, as large dominion and possibly more under this head healed than ever any head had before him; It is all who are not elected: whereby it is clear again, that this beast wondered after is Antichrist; and this admiration or worship, is more than civil: he hath exceed-

ing many; yea, Emperours, Kings, and great men, giving their power to him, and that willingly, Chap. 17. which they never did to any other. In a word, saith he, when this head came up, this beast got more followers and other sort of respect than ever before.

For clearing this exposition of the wound and healing. Consider, this wound must be at the time of the Churches begun flight, which was contemporary with the fall of Idolatrous Emperours: for, this healed head is contemporary with the woman's flight, therefore this wound must be before, which can be no other but that, though this healing immediately appeared not, as is said. 2. Consider, that at that time five heads were past, the seventh to come, which riseth after the healing of this wounded head, and is the seventh, or papacy; it is not wounded here, nor was it in being before these forty two moneths began, and during that time it hath power, and is not wounded: It must be then the sixth of the Emperours that suffered at that time when the woman began to flee. Now, there was then no wound in the temporal grandour, glory and state of the Empire, it was as great under *Constantine* as ever (Therefore he is known by that name *Constantine the great*) it must then be the change we expounded it to be. 3. Add, if the papacyes rising to be the seventh head, be the healing of this wound, Then must the wound be such a want or change as papacy supplieth; But papacy healeth this and is the seventh head. This beast which endureth forty two moneths and hath power from the Dragon, healeth and recovereth this seat that was lost, and sitteth again in *Rome*; &c. and this is papacy, as is proven and will (Chap. 17.) more fully appear. Now, the thing which the devil almeth at by the papacyes settling at *Rome*, is the recovering of that worship, which he lost; and by the Popes means again by Idols and Images the devil is worshipped, Chap. 9. 20. and here, *viz.* 2. Ergo, the removing this Idolatrous worship by publick Authority, which was the Dragon's casting from Heaven, Chap. 12. is the wound here. Beside, temporal over-running of the Empire by *Goths, Vandals*, and such like, can neither be called one wound, because it was frequent; nor attributed to this seventh head, because out of it the Popes reaped still advantage; as also they suit not this time, nor was the Emperours healed after these incursions, so as to have more following than before; and the Emperours not being heads, after they became Christian (as will be clear, Chap. 17.) and it not being they who are wondered at, as this head after its healing is, It cannot therefore be applied to them but as is said.

## LECTURE II.

Verf. 4. *And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast, and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?*

5. *And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two moneths.*

6. *And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.*

7. *And it was given unto him to make war with the Saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.*

8. *And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world.*



**T**He first part of this Chapter describeth Antichrist under a secular notion of civil power. It setteth him out, first, in his rise, *ver. 1, 2, 3.* In three things, 1. To what state he belongeth, to wit, that of *seven heads and ten horns*, that is, the *Roman*, *ver. 1, 2.* Of what nature he is; he is compounded of monstrous qualities, *ver. 2.*

To what time or revolution of that *Roman* state he belongeth, to wit, that which after the wounded head was healed and the horns had gotten Crowns, that is to say, after the civil Empire is weakened and divided in sundry Kingdoms, and the Pope steppeth up to act them all.

2. His reign or the effects of his rise, after his head is sealed, are set down, from *ver. 4.* forward, in four steps or effects, first, toward the graceless world; he obtaineth much respect and applause from them, even in the highest degree, so that he ruleth amongst them at his pleasure, *ver. 4.* The second is the time of his continuance, *ver. 5.* The third containeth his blasphemy or doctrine towards God, *ver. 6.* The fourth and last, his persecution against the Saints, or his practice towards them, *ver. 7, and 8.* The universality of the subjection he getteth, or of the power he hath, is restrained to the Reprobate world, as the proper object of his Kingdom, as it is of the Dragons who giveth him that power.

The first effect after his rising, (*ver. 4.*) is set out in three steps, expounding the wondering that was mentioned, *ver. 3.* 1. It is said they worshipped the Dragon. 2. The Beast. 3. Their respect to the Beast, is set down in a question or two, expressing their admiration.

This worship is not such as is given to civil Emperours, but is some religious, superstitious worship. 1. It is somewhat which is sinful to be given, which meer civil worship is not: for, Christ, the Prophets and Apostles do allow honour where it is due, as to great men, &c. 2. It is such worship, as is, on the matter, *worship to the devil*, that is, not as directly intended to him, but as all idolatry and worshipping of Images is interpretatively worshipping of devils, *Chap. 9. 20.* It being not commanded of God, but derogatory to him; so the worlds applauding and adoring this Antichrist will be, on the matter, before God a worshipping of the devil; especially considering that this Antichrist is peculiarly the devils lieutenant and trusty servant: and therefore, what honour he getteth, redoundeth to the honour of him that commissioneth him; so this worship terminateth immediately on the beast, as ye see in the end of the verse, *who is like him?* but mediately and consequently on the devil who gave him power. In a word, the world gave divine honour to this beast, and in him to the devil that commissioned him. Now, concerning that divine honour Popes get in their titles, by being accounted gods on earth and able to forgive sins, being adored by kissing their feet and by reverencing their words and decrees as infallible, even like Scriptures; yea, esteeming the Scriptures (as *Bail. Jesu. Catech. part. 1.*) but, as *Livius* writings without their Authority, and so receiving them only as they are ratified by them, &c. These are known things.

It may be questioned here, how it can be said, that the devil gave him power, seeing he hath no power to give, and seeing it is universally said, *Rom. 13. That the powers that are are of God?* *Ans.* Certainly this power is by Gods secret justice to punish the worlds ingratitude, 2 *Thess. 2.* He sendeth this delusion for a just end; yet it is said to be of the devil and not of God, because it is not by his revealed approving will, but contrary to it. 1. In the nature of the power, or the things wherein he taketh power. 2. Of his way of coming to it. 3. In his exercising of it: in all which he holdeth of the devil as his author, and not of God who hath warranted no such thing in his Word.

However by this worshipping, it appeareth that this beast who is the object of it, is more in the account of his worshippers than ordinary Monarchs. 2. That he standeth in a special relation to the devil, who is thus a sharer of his honour, and so can be no other than the Antichrist.

The particular worship, is instanced in two questions.

1. *Who is like the beast?* which setteth out their thoughts of him as more than ordinary. It looketh like these questions that the true worshippers of the true God have of him, *who is like the Lord? &c.* so there is a superstitious admiration wrought through delusion in these false worshippers, as supposing Antichrist to have some divine eminency and singularity in him, which hath been verified in reference to the Popes.

2. These two questions also hold out the ground and height of their admiration, to wit, his dreadfulnes and power. Therefore the second question is, *who is able to make war with him?* or, who can stand in opposition to him? It looketh to his power and the consequents of it. This was the worlds judgement of their Popes long. That they thought the greatest powers could not make head against them, and indeed so it was; partly, by that drunk-in delusion of his sanctity and Authority; partly, by his Excommunications and Bulls, deposing Kings, loosing Subjects from their oaths, giving away their Crowns, hounding out others on them; and all this to be executed under pain of damnation: and partly, by his having all civil powers at his devotion, as horns to push with where he pleased, and to set one against another; he did what he pleased. The examples of the Popes proceedings against the Emperours of the *East*, who were against Images, and against Emperour of the *West*, giving their Crowns from them to others, which wrought such terrour upon all others, that there was much more fear to anger the Pope than ever there was to anger any Monarch: yea, than there was to anger God, to such an height came his impiety. Mark here the Lords censure of Popery in its full extent, it is a worshipping of the devil; and this, in less or more, will be his censure of all corrupt worship not warranted by him.

The second step of the description of his dominion, is in its continuance, *ver. 5.* What is spoken of his blasphemies, cometh in *ver. 6.* He *speaketh great things*, in threatenings, promises and assertions of his own power. This the devil putteth him to; not by giving him power, But, 1. by making him take this power to him, as though he might blaspheme without hazard, he having liberty to say and do what he will. And 2. By moving others to grant this to him, as if he only were to be exempted, and this is meant by *power given* him to blaspheme: Which is not simply to blaspheme as others do, but a liberty by his office to do it without control, as one who legally and by right doth what he doth: and this agreeth well to the Pope, who pretendeth a power to do whatever he doth. This is a peculiar clause and article (as it were) in his commission, and it alludeth to what is spoken of *Antiochus*, *Dan. 7. 25.*

His time or continuance in this blasphemy, is, *fourty and two moneths*: the same with the *Gentiles* treading under the holy City, *Chap. 11. 2.* during which time blasphemy prevailleth, and the Saints are overcome and he domineereth. By the *fourty and two moneths* are not to be understood so many natural dayes, but (as was expounded) a long considerable time, probably counting a day for a year. This only is marked here, to shew it would not be a short storm, it looked like a continuing one: and this expression, *It was given him so continu*, though there be a limitation in it, yet its main purpose is to shew its long continuance. 2. To shew it belonged to the same time of the Churches low condition, *Chap. 11. and 12.* and that he is the beast spoken of, *Chap. 11. ver. 7.* 3. To learn us where to fix this beasts first rise, or from what time to deduce him; it is from the Churches fleeing or the Gentiles beginning to tread

tread underfoot the holy City. 4. It sheweth also that this power of his ; is bounded , and though God give him way so long in his just permissive Providence , yet it is but so long : His close tryeth precisely with the witnesses killing and the putting off their sackcloth.

2. By the setting this time of *fourty two moneths*, we would not conceive, 1. That he was at an height in the first moneth or alway alike : no , but as the Churches declining grew , so grew his rise : Nor, 2. that at the end of *fourty two moneths* his power shall be utterly broken ; no , for when he killeth the witnesses, then the vials are to be poured out, that piece and piece slowly bring on his destruction. But this is meant, that his Kingdom is on the encreasing hand till these moneths be past, what opposition cometh to him he will crush it ; but after that he will not be so , his power will be clipped , his tyranny discovered, and his authority so shaken and questioned, that it will never be so universally after that accepted , or be admitted to the exercise of it ; for, as that rearm bringeth not the full outgate of the Church to an height , but a beginning of it, even so here. Out of all this we may confirm what we said of this beast and that wound and its healing, which must be before these *fourty and two moneths*, during which time he continueth whole , and persecuteth the Saints , even at the very close or last part thereof.

His blasphemy is more fully set down, *ver. 6.* In reference to three objects, whom he taketh a liberty to blaspheme, which being in reference to God, derogateth some way from his excellent holiness and pure sovereign nature ; when applied to men or creatures, to blaspheme, is to speak ill of, to detract from and to wrong them by our words, so to blaspheme God and the King, 1 *King. 21. 10.* and in the New Testament often, *Col. 3. 8. Tit. 3. 2.* or to make them subservient to our blasphemy.

This blasphemy is three wayes vented, 1. *Against God*, this he doth by assuming to himself and giving to idols, Angels and Saints, what is due to God and his Son Jesus Christ. What prerogative is more than to forgive sins, and to be worshipped with religious worship ? and this he taketh to himself and giveth to others at his pleasure , making them the object of Adoration, Invocation, and so of Faith, his Dispensations, Indulgences, &c. 2. It is *against Gods tabernacle* ; that is, either the humane nature of our Lord Jesus, called *the true tabernacle*, *Heb. 9.* wherein God dwelleth in a special manner, *John 1.* and *Col. 2. 9.* or his Church and Saints on earth, which is called *the Temple*, *Chap. 11.* opposit to the outward Court , and is Gods Tabernacle with men, because in them he dwelleth , and as it were, sojourneth till he bring them to a settled enjoying of himself in his Temple in heaven , which sometimes in Scripture is opposed to the Tabernacle , as the triumphant Church is to the militant. Both these the Pope blasphemeth ; the first, by Masses, Hoasies, Adorations, Transubstantiation, and such things as these, whereby our Lords humane nature is quite altered and blasphemed, as if it were there , or had a created being at the pleasure of a wretched man. The second, the true Church and Saints are here blasphemed, to wit, by curses, reproaches, excommunications, and devouring of them to destruction, and proposing them as the vilest men and as the greatest hereticks in the world. Instances many are palpable. 3. *He blasphemeth these that dwell in heaven*, that is, Saints departed, and Angels, fathering many mischievous things on them, abusing their name to Idol-worship and charms : is there any thing more wronged and abused by them than *Peter* and *Mary* the blessed Virgin ? when many vile things are fathered on them and sought from them, as if they approved these things, Idols and idolatrous Temples filled by them and erected to them ; and what greater wrong than this can be done to these Saints, while as the Angel (*Rev. 19.*) reproved *John* for it ? These three , to wit, God, his

Church-militant and triumphant, the most excellent things in the world, he wrongeth them all and in the highest degree ; and to whom agreeth this so well as to the Pope ? and all this he doth not only in his own person, but, by decrees ordaineth it as by law, in short, as *Antiochus* blasphemed all whom in his practice he despised, and abused all, so shall he do and so hath he long done as if he professedly did blaspheme them.

The fourth part of the exercise of his power, is in persecution, *ver. 7.* It was given to him, even as all the rest was given, to make war with the Saints and to overcome them ; here are his fightings with the remnant of the woman's seed, *Chap. 12. 17.* he raiseth the world against them, and over their bodies they prevail. This war with the Saints taketh in all violent Martyrdoms of singular persons put to death for opposing this beasts usurpation, as were ( specially in the end of those moneths ) very many in *Italy, Germany, England, &c.* It taketh in also the purposed wars that for many years to the effusion of much blood were undertaken against the *Waldenses* and others that looked on the Pope as Antichrist. Ten hundred thousand men were slain, ( as is reported by *Peronius apud Med.* ) in *France*, and this done by way of stated war, not by pillagings, but by making use of strong Armies once intended against the *Sarracens*, which by the Pope were diverted and employed against the *Waldenses*. The history also of the *Bohemian* wars, after *John Huss* and *Jerome* of *Prague* were burnt, against these who were called *Hussites*, which continued in great eagerness for many years ; The history of the poor people of *Piedmont, Calabria* and *Angrongue*, and other places in *Italy*, persecuted by an Army under the Lord of *Trinity*, the destruction of *Mirindol*, and many poor people about in *Provence*, by the Archbishop of *Aix*, and the Lord of *Opede* President, beside the many barbarous cruelties in *Holland, Germany, France, &c.* are evidences of this war of the beast against the Saints, touched before, *Chap. 11. 7.* which blood though immediately shed by civil men, yet principally flowed from, and is to be charged on the whore, in whose skirts is found the blood of the Prophets and Saints, *Chap. 17. 6.* and *18. 24.*

The success is set down, *he overcometh them*, to wit, by spoiling them of their liberty, life and temporal estate for a time ; but they overcome him, by adhering to truth and refusing his corruptions, even at their lowest estate of suffering, as it was, *Chap. 12. ver. 11.*

After these characters of his dominion, his success, or the amplitude of his dominion, is more particularly set out and repeated, in three things, 1. In its extent, *He had power over all Kindreds, Tongues, and Nations*, that is, there was none exempted from him ; no Nation, Tongue, &c. who were Christian, that were preserved from his corruptions, and many whole Nations carried away with it, though not all of every Nation and Kindred were infected : in a word, it was very broad, *ver. 7.* 2. It is set out in the degree of their submission, *All that dwell on the earth, they shall worship him*, that is, be every way at his devotion, and shall take orders from him, and be his slaves to him. It is a sort of submission from some apprehension of some deity peculiar to this beast and this state of it beyond all others, as is said. 3. Left it should be thought that all went wrong, and there were no Church, the Elect are excepted, and this universality is restrained by this implied exception, *All such as were written in the Lamb's book of life are preserved* ; These are the little Temple set by, *Chap. 11.* and the same who were sealed, *Chap. 7.* and excepted from the hurt of the fifth trumpet, *Chap. 9. 4.* and the one hundred forty and four thousand, which (*Chap. 14.*) are standing as conquerors over the beast with the Lamb upon mount *Sion*. Whereby it appeareth, 1. There will be some excepted in the greatest tyranny of Antichrist. 2. That they are the same with the



one hundred forty and four thousand that were sealed, and consequently then this beast is Antichrist, and this worship antichristianism; for, these Saints, or Elect, are not kept or exempted from giving civil worship to temporal powers, or from being overcome with this beast as to temporal hurt, but from worshipping of him, which is the sinfulness of this plague. Therefore after it is said they got the victory over him, Chap. 14. and 15. this also is to be understood of full and final yielding to the Popes blasphemies; for, otherways Elect souls have sometimes been ensnared. In which respect here it is implied to be impossible, that an Elect can worship him, whence plainly it followeth, that no native Pope worshipper, owning him and the compleat body of his doctrine, and dying so, can be saved, except we would say one not elected may be saved: for, clearly this is pointed at as inconsistent with election, and proper to the Reprobate, Matt. 24. 24. 2 Thess. 2. 10.

It is true, this assertion is not rigidly to be extended to all who in part shall be guilty of Popery: Nor, 2. (as is said) to these who shall repent, but where there is a full and final who-

ring with wondering after this beast: this standeth as a peremptory truth, because in the Spirits account this worshipping of the beast, is blasphemy, and derogatory in a high degree to God. And, 2. his manner of worship in its compleat body, is idolatry. And, 3. his intermixing of Traditions, Satisfaction, merit of Works in Justification, &c. in his doctrine, is a perverting of the right wayes of the Lord, and a corrupting of the pure waters, that who drinketh thereof must die. Therefore we may confidently assert it; and indeed seeing the Lord distinguisheth His true Church from Antichrist, and calleth them *Gentiles*, Chap. 11. 2. and such as are not elected, Chap. 13. 8. but are to be damned, 2 Thess. 2. 10. and to drink of the wine of the wrath of God without mixture for ever, Chap. 14. 9, 10, 11. there is no place left for disputing this: which is set down as a dreadful sentence for scaring all from worshipping of that beast or receiving of his mark. Popery will be found no little crime before God, and to bring no little guilt and hazard upon souls what ever men think of it.

## LECTURE III.

Verf. 9. *If any man have an ear, let him hear.*

10. *He that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity: He that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the Saints.*

11. *And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.*

**T**He Spirit, having given a dark description of Antichrist, before He proceed to enlarge it in the following type, He doth in these two verses, to wit, 9, and 10. set down in plain words something necessary for the consolation of the Saints. 1. He layeth down that common and often repeated advertisement, *He that hath ears, let him hear*: by which, in this place, he setteth out, 1. the concernment of the knowledge of this mystery to Believers: and therefore we would not think it unworthy the pains to search in it. 2. It holdeth out an impossibility (I've to those who have ears) to take it up and understand it, therefore it will need the more diligence to search it. 3. It importeth a deafness in many who want ears for such Truths, and therefore it is not to be wondered although many Papists continue blind and do not discern this Truth.

Having premittid this general, He subjoyneth (verf. 10.) a special consolation, which may be a reason why people, in the flourishing estate of the wicked, would be the more observant, because there was retribution coming on the greatest and cruellest enemies of the Church, they being to be dealt with as they dealt with others. *He that leadeth into captivity----- he that killeth*, shall be so met with: which judgement holdeth out, 1. the singular observing of justice, meeting them in their own measure, Psal. 137. ult. Isai. 33. 1, 2. 2. A great change coming on the highest power, and so that there can be no stability in greatness when this admired beast is captivated, as if he said, think not this beasts standing will be eternal, he that leadeth captive some, banisheth and killeth others, the day cometh when he shall be led in captivity; for, if the general be true, that all that lead captive shall be led captive, then this beast also shall be so dealt with, beside that it peculiarly relateth to him.

The consolation is expressly in these words, *Here is the patience and the faith of the Saints. Here*, that is, in this thing,

and on this promise, there is a good ground for founding of both the patience and faith of the Saints. So that *here*, faith this much, that from this word they may patiently abide a while suffering, and by Faith expect an end to it, and an overthrow, and turn upon this powerful enemy that carrieth all now before him. Or, *here*, that is, in this tryal of Antichrists before the end come, is exercised the patience and faith of the Saints; now they will have to do with faith and patience, now is the time of their acting of it, till this word spoken (to give them an encouragement) come to pass, to wit, that the two evils they suffered, *killing and captivity*, shall be returned on their enemies heads: Gods promise is that which keepeth life in faith and patience and strengtheneth them, but still a time interveneth between the promise and the out-gate for the exercise of both these; and this is the end of continuing straits, else there should be little use for these Graces which are well put together.

From the 11. verf. followeth the second part of Antichrists description under a different type, because his way, end and pretexts, are such as cannot altogether by one beast be set out, It being no strange thing to set out our Lord differently, sometimes as a Lion, and sometimes as a Lamb, as in the fifth Chapter; So is his ape Antichrist under a twofold consideration described, as was said at the entry to this Chapter. If it be asked; how it can be called *another beast*, as different from the former? *Ans.* 1. It is another type describing the same power, as *Greece* (Daniel 7.) is described as a *Lepard*; and (Daniel 8.) as an *He-goat*, yet but the same power signified in its diverse qualification. 2. It may be called another beast, 1. Because it setteth out the same Antichrist, as in a different consideration, to wit, under the first beast, he is considered as a temporal secular Monarch in a series with the heads of the beast that went before, altogether constituting one beast and power in a continued line in one seat; but under this

this beast, he is considered as abstracted, and under this particular head, to wit, the last, and as considered distinctly by itself and not complexly under the multiplicity of heads as it was considered before, The Roman Monarchy being considered absolutely in the first, but in some respect only under the last: In which respect (according to the best Interpreters) the Kingdom of the Seleucides and Lagides, though it be comprehended under the fourth beast, yet is there a distinct consideration taken of Antiochus by himself, who was one of the horns of that beast, Dan. 7. because Gods people specially suffered from him; and he being in many things typical of Antichrist, it may thus be done with respect to that also. 2. He is considered under the first type, as constituting one body with the horns and making use of them; here as head to the Clergy and making use of them: in the former he acteth by a civil Power, warring against the Saints and overcoming them. Here by spiritual weapons, as miracles, excommunications, pretences to Christ, (as we may hear) and therefore may be considered as a different power, the things he doth and the means he maketh use of being so different, one type will not fully describe him. Therefore this seventh head, being in respect of his claim so different from the rest, ought to have a consideration or type beyond them; In which sense, though he be the seventh head, Chap. 17. yet is he also called the eighth upon this consideration. 3. Under the first type, especially the matter of Antichristianism, or this Dominion or Kingdom it self, is set down; but under the second, the persons exercising that Dominion, and that by a pretence to Christ.

For the better understanding of this, consider three things, 1. That this beast is not in time posterior to the first, as considering it under the last head; for, he giveth life to the first, hath a hand in the healing of his wound, and so in his rise, it must be at the beginning of the fourty two Moneths with the other. But this head, as abstractly considered, may be said to be behind the first beast in his complex consideration with all his heads: 2. As they agree in time, so they agree in design. This beaſts design is to make the first to be worshipped (which certainly sheweth they are one) but under this vail of an Ecclesiastick power and interest, as is said, and *in ordine ad spiritualia*, he driveth his design of pursuing temporal greatness and grandour. 3. The power is the same; for, (vers. 12.) all the power or commission of the first, is exercised by this, but variously vented, to wit, formerly by a violent way, here spiritually under deceitful signs, yet for the same end: whereby it appeareth, that the chief design of the spirit in this last part of his description by this type, is to show, 1. upon what account the world gave him such reverence. 2. by what midles he procured that temporal greatness and respect; he deceived the world by signs, &c. as is expressly set down, vers. 14.

In this description there are three parts. In the first, are set down the characters and design of this beast. 2. his weapons or means, whereby he prevailed to make his design effectual, from vers. 13, to 17. inclusive. 3. he giveth a character common to both these beasts, whereby it appeareth they are one, vers. 18. From all, it will be evident that this second beast setteth out Antichrist as a false Prophet, as the first did as an usurping Tyrant.

There are four things marked in his description, vers. 11, and 12. 1. It is described whence he rose, to wit, the earth: this doth not necessarily infer a different thing to be signified, as by comparing Dan. 7. 2, 3. with vers. 17. will appear; the same beasts rise both from the Sea and the Earth: and though in that place the Sea be figuratively, and the Earth properly to be understood, whereas both are figuratively here, yet it enervateth not the force of the reason, because as there may be many diverse types, so diverse rises of these types, as the Grecian Monarchy, compared to a Leopard, having his rise from the Sea, Dan. 7. vers. 3, 6. is set forth by an he-goat having his rise from the west. But it setteth out, 1. an humane or earthly beginning, opposit to divine; it is not from Gods warrant but from beneath. 2. An extending of his dominion to sea and land, as the Angel, (Chap. 10.) set his feet on both, or, both over secular Powers and Ecclesiastick, according to the two rises of the several beasts. 3. A base beginning, yet rising withall slowly and insensibly in respect of this spiritual power; whereas his temporal power grew most in troubles and commotions, his spiritual did grow most in peace. 4. Because this appearance like a lamb, is not so monstrous-like as the former (which came out of the Sea, where great monsters do breed) but more tame-like, from the earth.

The second thing he is described from, is his nature, in two similitudes, to wit, of his horns and his speech: and this partial describing of him but in few parts, and not in moe, as the first beast was, sheweth that in all other things he agreeth and is the same with the former, as is particularly said of his power, vers. 12. Generally, this resemblance holdeth him forth to have a meek pretext and appearance, as hurtful to none by his power, more than a lamb can be with his horns, but really to speak and to be far otherwise in deed, as Christ speaketh of false prophets in general, Matth. 7. *They come to you in sheeps clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves*; so to the chief false prophet this doth exceedingly well quadrate. More particularly, looking on this similitude of the lamb here to relate to Christ as certainly when he is said to speak like a Dragon, it hath respect to the Dragon formerly mentioned, Chap. 12. and his blasphemies (seeing otherways Dragons do not properly speak) So while he is said to have horns like a lamb, it holdeth out a pretence he maketh to Christs power and to look very innocent-like, as his vicar on earth, having all power to bind and loose for the good of souls, and so to do all in the Lambs name, and to prosecute his designs by his means, to wit, miracles, censures, excommunications, &c. This he is in shew; but really come nearer to the trial of him, he speaketh as the Dragon, that is, his doctrine in general is blasphemous and idolatrous as was the heathen Emperours. Where it is observable he spake not as the first beast, vers. 5, and 6. of this Chapter, but as the Dragon, Chap. 12. there being an identity in these two beasts; and he is likened to the Dragon, because none intervened; the first beast spake like him also. 2. His decrees were to the same purpose, commanding the worshipping of Images, murdering of Saints, suppressing of Truths, &c. 3. His manner is not meek like a lamb, but terrible with threatenings, in case all be not obeyed that he commandeth. In a word, he appeareth one thing, and is indeed fully another.

## LECTURE. IV.

Verf. 12. *And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein, to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.*



13. And he doth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth, in the sight of men.

14. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast, saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

15. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast, should be killed.

16. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bound, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads.

17. And that no man might buy or sell save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

**W**E have heard two parts of this beasts description, to wit, concerning his rise and nature, v. 11. In the 12. v. there are two other, touching his practice and design. If it be asked, what power this beast hath or exerciseth, who looketh so lamb-like? It saith, *He exerciseth all the power of the first beast*: In a word, the same power formerly described, as agreeing to the former type, is exercised by this beast under pretext of his respect to Christ as his vicar and depute; he warreth with the Saints, maketh blasphemous decrees, &c. whereby a different power certainly is not described, but the way laid down how that beast did attain to exercise so great power, so that the Pope is inferiour to no Emperour. This saith, its under the notion of Christs vicar and pretence of Religion: which confirmeth what was said, that the first type describeth Antichrists power; this, the person exercising it and his manner of doing it. There is more difficulty of interpreting these words *before him*, or, *in his sight*, which importeth a contemporariness of this beast with the former, but not that they be different. It may be understood then, 1. to imply a respect to this end, to wit, temporal greatness, which this beast under this type specially aimed at. So, *before him*, is as much as in his favours to usher him in, as if he were the other beasts Harbinger, as it is said of John, Mark 1. *I send my messenger before thy face, &c.* And thus by this shape and appearance he maketh way for the power formerly described. This agreeth well with the scope following, to wit, the Pope his using this Ecclesiastick cloak for attaining this temporal end.

In a word, that that power was exercised by the Pope under this pretext or shape, to establish the secular power expressed in the former type. 2. It is expounded by some, *before him*, that is, in the seat where the beast (complexly taken) sat, to wit, at Rome.

The fourth part of the description cleareth this, to wit, that which holdeth forth his great end and design in exercising that power; It is to *cause the earth, and them that dwell in it, to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed*. By this *first beast*, is not understood simply the Roman Empire, but as under the seventh head, to wit, the papacy, after the deadly wound, which the sixth head got by Constantine's destroying Idolatry, was healed by Papacy.

By *earth and them that dwell therein*, are meant the generality and plurality of the Christian world, especially the carnal multitude. By *worshipping*, is meant that adoration whereof we spoke, vers. 8. and by *his causing them, &c.* is imported both his end and effectualness in promoting it. In a word, he seeketh and endeavoureth by all means to keep up the authority and corrupt way of the old heathenish Empire in his person, that it get no less reverence in the world than any head that went before. And this which is in general here, he

more particularly prosecuteth in the verses following. Out of which is confirmed, 1. That these two beasts are not, upon the matter and really different, seeing this last alwayes seeketh the firsts honour; which, if they were different, could not agree to the Pope or Antichrist, who preferreth his own credit and authority to any other. And, 2. It sheweth that the scope of this type is especially to shew how the Pope came to what he was described to be in the former. So really the Popes gaining honour and worship to himself, was, upon the matter, a gaining respect and honour to the beast, as it had before his time; for though the object was somewhat altered, the series and kind was materially the same.

The particular way how the Pope rose to this temporal height under a Religious shew, is set down in three steps, or a threefold influence he hath, 1. on the world, to cause them make an Image, 2. on the Image, to make it be respected. 3. on all men, by making them receive his mark. And the means how he attained all these are set down, 1. By miracles and signs; he cometh in on folks estimation and deceiveth them, as if he were something, vers. 13, and 14. 2. He proposeth the making of an Image to the former beast, that is, to clatch up and set on foot again a Roman power somewhat like the former before the head was wounded, though not the same, vers. 14. which by miracles he effecteth. 3. He giveth power to and animateth that beasts Image to do for it self and to gain worship, (vers. 15.) by its killing such as do it not. 4. By his engaging all to worship that beast, and taking them in a special manner engaged to him under highest certifications of not buying or selling or keeping common commerce with them, vers. 16, 17. And he bringeth this to pass.

The miracles which are the first mean, are, 1. set down generally. 2. instanced particularly. 3. the influence of them on the world to deceive them (which is the shor of all) is set down. Generally, miracles are divided in true and false, 1. True, are such as exceed natural or second causes, which were proofs of our Lords Deity, and sometimes by the power of God are mediately exercised by men. 2. False miracles, are not only such things as are meer jugglings (such as possibly were by the Magicians in Egypt) but such as though they have some wonderment in them to men who know not the causes which produce these effects, yet are really brought about by second means; such are spoken of by Christ, Mat. 23. and such the Apostle saith shall make Antichrist famous, *He shall come in the power and after the working of Satan, with signs, and lying wonders*, 2 Thess. 2. 9. Of this last sort are the Popes miracles; and it suiteth well with Antichrist to be stored with miracles of this nature, such as the papacy aboundeth with and glorieth in: and therefore none needeth to stumble to hear them mentioned.

The particular pitched on; is, *He maketh fire come down from Heaven*. It is not needfull to stick to the letter here, the scope is clear,

clear, it is to shew he shal do great signs for confirming his doctrine and power, even as *Elias* did, who twice made fire come down from heaven, 1 *King.* 18. 38. 2 *King.* 1. 10. So, as it were, he shall not be behind him. That miracle of fire coming down, is instanced to shew they shall be great. Beside history maketh it clear, that often fire visions have been made, use of by the Popes for gaining their point, as when *Stephanus* is going to seek help from *Pipinus* against *Astulphus* King of the *Lombards*, Anno 751. fire balls are seen reeling and falling in amongst them, which he interpreteth as holding forth their ruine; and Anno 776. two fire targets appear against the *Saxons*, when they are to fight against *Charles* the great at *Herburgh*. *Zacharias* the Pope in his march against *Ravenna*, hath *ignis acies* going before him, Cent. 9. 301, &c. Or, it may be applyed to the fire threatnings and curses by which they thundred and terrified men, and a counterfeit assuming of Christs Power and Authority, as the two witnesses were really furnished therewith, Chap. 11.

The scope and effect, is, he deceiveth the world by these miracles: in a word, he deludeth them to think him indeed more than ordinary: which, (2 *Thess.* 2.) is called to believe lies; and by these he confirmeth his doctrines and mandates, and maketh them passe as uncontroverted: and indeed all the Popish miracles tend to confirm Invocation of Saints or Angels, Transubstantiation, Purgatory, or some such thing, as witnesseth *Baronius* his frequent mentioning of miracles, for this end, to confute Hereticks, &c. and further in the *Centuries*, cap. de miraculis, &c. This agreeth well to Antichrist in the doctrine, and to the Pope in the fact: and under miracles and signs would be understood all these stupendious things spoken of amongst the Papists, either as done by the Pope himself, or by some of his vassels under him, yet so as the authorizing of such things dependeth only on him.

We come to that wherein he deludeth, or deceiveth the world; which he by his miracles almeth at: its saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an Image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. Concerning this Image, take these advertisements, 1. That it is no dead Image, but an Empire, that can speak and can cause such as will not worship it, be killed. 2. It is no different power from the two beasts formerly described, but the same under a distinct consideration of its rising, or of its appearing. This Image is the Pope under a civil notion, in which respect, he is the Image of the former Empire and the effect of his lamb-like appearance: in which respect, he is the efficient of this effect; for, this Image of the beast getteth the common worship of all the world with the former in all repetitions afterward, Chap. 15. 2. and 16. 2. and Chap. 14. 9. it is alway one; the character of the beast and his Image, the victory over the beast and his Image, are one; the judgement, on the worshippers of both is the same, which can be true of no other but the Antichrist. 3. The reason why it is called here the Image, is to hold forth the way and steps how the Pope came to an height in temporal things by some resemblance to the old Empire. It is not every way the same with the former under this head, yet very like. Therefore, in some respect, it is its Image rather than it self; and that though both in its power and in its pretext he saith one thing, as if he were setting up *Peters* throne, yet really he is doing another, to wit, making an Image to the old Heathenish superstitious way of worship, that was under the former heads. Therefore it is said, he deceiveth the world, that is, that he made them never acquaint with his design or intention of his work, which was to erect former Idolatry in worship and tyrannie in his own person, but as if he minded the honour of Christ, *Peter*, Saints, &c. an the furtherance of Religion: he brought the world to be instrumentall in bringing about this design, which (when it was accomplished) is the Image of the heathenish

Empire, for extent of dominion, manner of worship cruelty against the Saints, &c. And therefore when he is brought in (v. 14.) saying, that they should make an image to the beast, this is to be understood as the language of the design in it self, and not of his expression, as is frequent in Scripture. In a word, by Image is understood the Papacies temporal power, which is indeed Imperial-like, and therefore so expressed by the former type. So then, in this 14. vers. there is, 1. the design to make an Image to the beast which was wounded. This is called an Image, because it was in a great part like it, therefore represented as one Monarchy with it; yet not every way the same, therefore set out by another type also, as is said. 2. His manner of proceeding in his design, is, 1. In engaging the men of the world; for, he could not without them effectuate it, 2. The way he engageth them, it is saying, or perswading; which is not to be meant of expresse saying so, but his miracles had such a language with them as to encline and perswade the deluded world to be well content to further such a thing.

3. The successe is hinted at in the last words, and it did live, so it will read, & revixit, or vixit: not as if he were describing a present living pattern according to which that Image was to be drawn, but either he speaketh of the beast as it lived before it received the wound, which did then live; or, as it may be read, it was wounded, and it did live, to wit, after his pains taken on the world to heal it, which is enlarged in the following verse, so that this is set down here by way of anticipation as is usuall. That this wound is said to be by a sword, sheweth it is not a wound by a schism, but by violence as was that in the sixth seal, Chap. 6.

He proceedeth to shew the third step how this Image was made to live, vers. 15. It is by this two horned beast the Antichrist, he hath power to work a threefold effect on this Image, that is, by the devils assisting him, (God in secret justice permitting the world to be deluded) he is able to bring this design about, and that little rude draught of the Image, which at first was but dead and as it were in shape, he brought so on, till he at last made it look like that beast which went before it.

The first effect he worketh on the Image, he maketh it live there was matter for a time in the *Roman* Church sufficient to heal the wound which the former head had gotten, but it wanted the form, which in time the Pope did give it by his taking to him supreme power in Civil and Ecclesiastick things and imitating heathenish superstitions in worship, so that which seemed to be dead before, now standeth up and appeareth. 2. He giveth it power to speak, that is, he furnisheth pretexts to it for taking on and venting this power in its degrees, threatnings, curses, &c. The third effect or part of the power committed to him, which constituteth this Image, is, power to cause (for the Image getteth this power) that as many as will not worship it shall be killed: which implicth, 1. That this Image is worshipped and allowed to be so universally as the beast was. 2. That this beast, or Image, will have worship under pain of death, that is, where the supremacy of this Pope is denied, there is nothing can keep from burning: It shall be capital, as heretical, and treasonable. 3. This Image causeth that they shall be killed, that is, by stirring up the powers of the world, who are devoted to it, to suffer none to live under them who did not acknowledge him. 4. It is said, this two horned beast giveth that power to the Image, because it is under the pretext of being vicars to Christ that they take the things on them; and it is that pretext which giveth them so much weight amongst men in the world as to be so worshipped. They may thank their counterfeiting *Peter's* succession for that. 5. He killeth not, but causeth that they should be killed; this is their way, to deliver to civil Magistrates as executors them whom they desire to be destroyed. Y y 3. The



The last step of exercising his power, is *vers.* 16, and 17. In his engaging and marking all for himself as his proper vassals and slaves by three marks. All which tend to shew a special relation between him and them, and a peculiar dependance of them on him. 1. There is a mark, such as men put on their beasts, or merchants on their goods to make them known to be theirs. This mark is specially urged by him and threatened with wrath from God, *Chap.* 14. 9, 10. 2. His name, or, the name of the beast which is broader: the meaning is, others are like children who partake of their fathers name, or as the wife that partaketh of the husbands name; so they partake of this beasts name. He is the Pope and they Papists, glorying in that as his native brood, thinking more to be called a Catholick Roman, or Papist, than a Christian or something like this. 3. The number of his name, seemeth to be yet larger, as ye would say the *minimum quod sic*: without which none can passe as his, so that if they have not the mark, they must have the name, or, at least, the number of it whereof more hereafter. This effect is extended and particularized in two respects, 1. None of any sort escapeth, small or great, &c. 2. The part marked, is the right hand and forehead, holding forth an obvious manner of avowing him, and an active engagement for him; It is said, Souldiers did wear marks on their right hands, and servants in their foreheads, but Popes hold men engaged under both these relations to them: (This *Mede* upon the place cleareth) by which Characters we are not to understand visible marks imprinted; but according to the scope, that as our Lord hath his seal on His, *Chap.* 7. so this beast, who imitateth Him, hath something peculiar as from himself which Christ instituted not, which he will have on these who are his: and let it be observed, that both the beasts and the Image cometh under one beast here. 3. The certification whereby he inforceth this mark or subjection on men, it is by taking from them the common privileges of conversing with others under these words, *to buy or sell*, that looketh either to Ecclesiastick or Civil communion; all that will not become his, shall be excluded from both these: and if we look how far the Papists extend the excommunication of the Popes in debarring men from these things, and the use they make of their excommunications to force their obedience on many Emperours and others, they will be found clearly applicable in this particular.

In a word, this beasts drift, is, to make up an Image to the head that is wounded, and to establish such an Idolatrous grand-our and government again. And he bringeth it about by exercising his power, 1. On the men of the world, to make them pliable to it, which he doth by miracles and signs, *vers.* 13, 14. under pretext of some divinity. 2. On the beasts Image, by helping on that design in three steps, giving it life and putting it to act for its own worship when once was formed; for, the scope (reckoning still the intention of the work) is to shew this beasts design. Now if the beast and Image were different, he would not, yea could not procure universal worship to both and that by one power, and if any of them were different from himself, he would not. 3. He exerciseth his power by putting his mark on all, which he attaineth by censures, lest they be shut out from common commerce, or the advantages of his foul-merchandise and mercats, as he prevailed in the former of procuring worship to the Image for fear of death and killing.

For the confirming of what is said, we will find these things clear in the matter of fact from story, 1. That what Rome wanted by the Emperours turning to be Christians, or removing of their seat from it, it recovered by the Popes. And, 2. that that recovery began immediately after *Constantin's* coming to the Empire. 3. That the Popes used the same practices of blasphemy against God, persecution against His Saints,

and followed it by the same means of deposing Emperours, assuming temporal power, and interdicting from fellowship and commerce with others: and although these things be particularly marked in particular Treatises and upon particular occasions, yet it may be observed here,

1. That Rome recovered and preserved dominion and grand-our only by the Popes means, witnesse, 1. that passage out of *Steuchus, De donatione Constantini. Everso Imperio, nisi Deus restituisset pontificatum, futurum erat, ut Roma nullo tempore excitata ac restituta, inhabitabilis posthac, foedissima bovm porcorumque futura esset habitatio: at in pontificatu etsi non illa veteris imperii magnitudo, species certe non dissimilis longe reuata est, qua gentes omnes, haud secus ab ortu & occasu, Romanum pontificem venerantur, quam omnes nationes olim Imperatoribus obtemperabant. Et paulo post, An non omniaque Rome quondam profana erant, sacra effecta sunt, quemadmodum omnia templa deorum facta sunt Ecclesiae sanctorum? ritus item profani, ceperunt esse ritus sacri? Nonne Pantheon, templum omnium idolorum, effectum est templum beate virginis? (secundum alios omnium diuinarum) Nonne in Vaticano templum Apollinis, ubi condita erant corpora Apostolorum, conuersum in Ecclesiam ipsorum Apostolorum? ut superius demonstratum est, &c.* That is to say, The Empire being overturned, if God had not restored the pontificate (or papacy) it had come to passe, that Rome at no time being raised up and restored, afterward being uninhabitable, had become a most vile stable of Cowes and Swine: But in the pontificate (or papacy) although not that greatnesse of the ancient Empire, yet surely the appearance of it not much unlike was brought forth again, whereby all Nations from the East to the West do adore the Roman Pontife (or Pope) no otherwayes than of old all Nations did obey the Emperours. And a little after, are not all things which at Rome of old were profane (or common) made holy, as all the Temples of the gods were made Churches of Saints? also their profane rites began to be holy rites? was not the Pantheon, that Temple of all Idols, made the Temple of the blessed Virgin (according to others of all Saints) Was not the Temple of Apollo in the Varicane, where were buried the bodies of the Apostles, turned into the Church of the Apostles themselves, as was demonstrated above, &c. These are a Popish writers expressions, defending *Constantines* donation: And in this sense, it may well be called the Image of the head that went before. Add to this some passages cited by *Bellarmino, lib. 3. de Pont. cap. 21.* The first out of *Leo Magnus, Serm. 1. de natali Apostolorum. Per sacram D. Petri sedem; Caput orbis effusa; (Roma) latius praesides religione diuinâ, quam dominatione terrenâ: quamvis enim multis aucta victoriis, Jus imperii tui, terra marique protuleris, minus tamen est, quod tibi bellicus labor subdidit, quam quod pax Christiana subiecit.* That is, By the holy Sea of S. Peter, (O Rome) thou being made the head of the world, commandest further by diuine Religion, than earthly domination: for albeit, being augmented by many victories, thou hast extended the power of the Empire both by Sea and Land, yet it is lesse, that which the labour of war hath subdued to thee, than that which Christian Peace hath brought in subjection. The other passage is out of *Prosper. lib. de ingratis, cap. 2.*

*Sedes Roma Petri, quae pastoralis honoris*

*Facta caput mundo, quicquid non possidet armis.*

*Religione tenet.*

That is to say, Rome the Sea of Peter, which is made to the world the head of pastoral honour, whatever it doth not possesse by armes, it holdeth out by Religion. Also that passage, cited by *Forbesse* out of *lib. 2. de vocatione gentium, Chap. 16. Roma per sacerdotii principatum amplior facta est religionis, quam solio potestatis.* That is, Rome through the dominion of the priesthood (or papacy) is made larger by the castle of Religion, than by the throne of power.

From

From which passages it is clear, that *Rome* before the papacies height was really short (as wounded) in respect of what formerly it was, and also that what pomp *Rome* now enjoyeth, and what dominion it hath, it hath by vertue of the Popes supremacy. Let us add further some passages more, 1. Out of *Socrates, lib. 7. cap. 11.* who, speaking of the violence of *Celestinus*, who was Bishop of *Rome*, saith, that he, in exercising his power (as also the Bishops of *Alexandria*) had gone, *Jam dudum extra fines sacerdotii in principatum secularum*, that is, long since without the bounds of the priestly office into the secular dominion. And if it be true what is commonly asserted by Papists concerning the donation of *Constantine*, whereby he gave *Rome* and the parts about it to the Popes, to be possessed by them, as the patrimony of *Peter*; and that therefore purposely he left *Rome* to the Pope upon that account, thinking it fit, &c. *Ideo autem par esse censuimus, ut nostrum imperium imperiisque potentiam orientem transferemus, &c. quod ubi est principale sacerdotium & caput Christiane Religionis, datum a Rege cœlorum, non est æquum ut terrenus Imperator illic potestatem habeat.* That is, Therefore we judged it fite to translate our Empire and the power of it into the East, &c. because where the chief Priesthood (or Papacy) and the head of Christian Religion is appointed to be by the King of Heaven, it is not right that an earthly Emperour should there have power. Which donation is more largely set down by *Balsamon, pag. 88.* and is generally owned by them with all the other contents thereof.

Agreeable to this it is which *Baronius* asserteth, *Anno 312. num. 80.* of *Constantin's* giving the imperial palace to *Melchisedes* the Bishop of *Rome*, and what is afterward recorded by him to be conferred as pieces of dignity by that same Emperour upon them, *Anno. 324. num. 79.* that *Constantine* would not suffer the prime Priests of the Christians to be exceeded in glory by the heathen Priests, who ever were adversaries to Christianity. And these privileges are reckoned by him, thus, *Hæc erant privilegia quibus templorum sacerdotes à majoribus traditis fruerentur: inter eos, eminebat sacrorum Rex, qui in conviviis super omnes excubare solebat; erat & Pontifex maximus, arbiter humanarum atque divinarum rerum omnium, quod breviter narratum habes ex Festo. Quanta autem potestas in Augure, qui comitia irrita reddere & abdicare etiam consules magistratu valeret, que paulo ante recitavimus ex Cicerone, declarant. Vetitum iis erat, (ait Plutarchus) equo vehi, sed uti carpento pro amplissima dignitate soliti erant. Sacerdotum peculiaris mos (quod affirmat Tacitus) erat, carpento capitolum ingredi; sic & videas Romanos pontifices (quod tradit Ammianus) per urbem carrucis vehi, procedunt (inquit) vehiculis insidentes, circumspicere vestiti: sed & magna illa dignitas esse videbatur, quod (ut idem ait) nunquam pileum, insigne flaminum, deponebant, cum (ut idem testatur Plutarchus) ceteri solebant occurrentibus caput detegere. Observat hoc ipsum in hunc diem Romanus Pontifex. Refert idem etiam dialis flaminis immunitatem, ut jurare ei minus liceat, quod non conveniat de rebus minimis fidem eidem non habere cui res sacræ & maxime concredite sint, &c. Rursum vero deorum sacerdotes purpuram indubant, eandemque pretiosam, nempe, bis tinctam, ut indicat Ciceronis locus ille, &c. Mos quoque erat, quum dedicaretur summus Sacerdos, vittâ & coronâ aureâ caput ornari.* That is to say, These are the privileges which the Priests of the Temples did enjoy as being delivered unto them from their fore-fathers: amongst them was eminent the King of their holy things, who in their banquets used to watch over them all; and the chief Priest was Umpire of divine and humane things, as ye have briefly related out of *Festus*. And how great power was in their sooth-sayers, who could render even their common Councils of none effect. and abdicate the Consuls from their Magistracy, these things which we did a little before recite out of *Cicero*, do declare.

It was forbidden to them (saith *Plutarch*) to use a horse, but they were accustomed to use a chariot for their greater dignity. It was the proper custome of the Priests to enter the Capitol (as *Tacitus* affirmeth) in a chariot; So ye well see the *Roman* Priests (as relateth *Ammianus*) to be carried through the Town in Coaches, they go (saith he) sitting in Coaches being clothed very circumspicuously: and that also seemeth to be a great dignity, that they never took off their cap, or bonnet, which was the ensign of the Priests, when as (as the same *Plutarch* witnesseth) all other used to uncover their heads to these they met. The Pope or *Roman* Priest, observeth the same untill this day. The same Author reporteth also this immunity of *Jupiters* Priest, that he might not give an oath, because it was not suitable, that he should not be trusted in smaller things, to whom the holy things and the greatest were concredited, &c. But again, the Priests of the gods were clothed with purple, and that very precious, to wit, twice dyed, as that place of *Cicero* sheweth, &c. Also that was the custom, when the high Priest was dedicated, to have his head adorned with a riband or lace, and a crown or garland of gold, &c.

In which words we have the derivation of much of the *Roman* or Pontifical Pomp, to wit, the imitation of the heathenish high Priest: in which respect, the same Author *Baronius* disputeth much of their honour, *Anno 312. num. 85. and 98.* as also giveth that for the reason why the Christian Emperours did still retain the title of *Pontifex Maximus* untill the reign of the Emperour *Gratian*: left, saith he, the people should have been stirred up against them, if publickly to soon they had disowned their ancient Religion, which by that title was still after a sort preserved in the Emperours. By which reason the Author grants a great suitableness in that title to the old heathenish Religion; and that therefore seeing Popery (by his confession) hath both the name and the thing, in a great part, from the heathenish idolatrous Priests, as a copy casten in imitation of them, There must be here a great resemblance to the former wounded head indeed. and if that be true which *Belarmine* asserteth, (*Lib. 1. de Conciliis & Ecclesiâ, cap. 19.*) as the reason why the Bishops of *Rome* never kepted personally the Councils while they were in the East. 1. That it became not him who was the head to follow the Councils: And, 2. that he eschewed to be present where the Emperor was, lest he should have seemed to cede in place to him. This will shew a very timely springing up of this supremacy. And although some doubt may be made of some of these particulars in matter of fact, and what was true of them, was not without a testimony against them; yet their owning of and pleading for these things, do sufficiently clear the succession and resemblance of Popery to heathenish Idolatry, beside what is elsewhere said of its blasphemy. Again, it is clear, if we will consider how many Emperours and Kings have been trod upon by this Pope, and their Kingdoms disposed of to others, not only neighbouring Nations, but their own Subjects loosed from all tye and obligation to them, and all commerce even of buying and selling to be interdicted with these who acknowledge not the Pope: of which, see *Decretum Martini 5. in fine Concilii Constantinensis. Prohibetur iis qui Romanum sedem non agnoscunt domicilia tenere, lavem fovere, contractus inire, negotiationes & mercaturas quaslibet exercere, aut humanitatis solatia cum Christi fidelibus habere. Et in concilio Laterano, sub Innocentio tertio. Si dominus temporalis terram suam neglexerit purgare ab hæretica pravitate, excommunicationis vinculo innodetur, & summus Pontifex vasallos ab ejus fidelitate denunciaret absolutos, & terram exponat aliis occupandum.* That is to say, It is forbidden to these who acknowledge not the *Roman* Sea to keep houses, kindle fire, make contracts, exercise whatsoever Negotiation;



gations or Merchandises, or to have the comforts or refreshings of humanity with the faithful ones of Christ.

And in the *Laterane* Council, under *Innocent* the third. If a temporal Lord neglect to purge his Countrey from heretical wickedness, let him be under the bond of excommunication, and let the Pope declare his Subjects or Vassals free from their fidelity, and set forth his Countrey or Land to be occupied by others.

Hence it was made treason to have any commerce with the *Lollards*: and according to these acts, the Pope excommunicated *Henry* the 8. and interdicted all commerce with the *English* Nation, as it is emitted by *Paulus tertius*, Anno 1538. and recorded in the History of the Council of *Trent*.

Their bloody cruelty against the Saints, with their success therein, is notour not only by the writings of Historiographers, but is built on by themselves as a special evidence of their Church, and is made the 15. Note of it by *Bellarmino* de notis *Ecclesie*, lib. 4. cap. 18. Which being compared with the former Chapter, they contain many great victorles of old and late against the *Albigenses* and others, opposers of the Pope; so as he concludes, that scarcely ever have these who were called Hereticks, been Superiour. Which indeed being looked upon, as during Antichrists continuance of fourty two moneths, it may be the fulfilling of what is spoken, ver. 5, and 7. of this same Chapter: and what *Bellarmino* saith there of the killing of 100000. *Waldenses* at one time, and what *Mede* citeth out of *Peronius*, that the number of the slain exceeded in *France* 1000000. during these wars, or any other story wherein they boast of the unhappy event that followed the opposers of the Pope of *Rome*, and so cite many Emperours, both of the East and West, overrun by him. It will tend to make up the proof of these assertions,

1. That the Bishops of *Rome* assumed to themselves as absolute Sovereignty over Kings and Kingdoms, as ever the former Emperours did over Provinces.

2. That they wanted not witnesses against their usurpation,

but that in Gods secret justice they had power given them for so many hundreth years together to prevail over them, and with a high hand to massacre and undo them.

And 3. That in every thing they have fulfilled in them the characters pointed out in this beast.

Neither is it unobservable that *Bellarmino* attributeth that greatness of the Popes Dominion to the time preceeding the Reformation, and so falleth within his fourty two Months reign, for (saith he) lib. 3. de Pontif. cap. 21. Nam ob eo tempore, quo per vos Papa Antichristus esse cepit, non modo non crevit ejus imperium, sed semper magis ac magis decrevit. Leonis Magni tempore, id est, annis centum quinquaginta antequam Antichristus vestra sententia nasceretur, Papa Romanus pluribus gentibus presidebat, quam sese Romani imperii fines extenderint, &c. Paulo post, Nostri vero temporibus, tam prosperè illi omnia successerunt, ut magnam Germaniæ partem amiserit, Suetiam, Gothiam, Norvegiam, Daniam universam, bonam Angliæ, Galliæ, Helvetiæ, Polonia, Bohemiæ ac Panoniæ partem. Itaque si prosperè agere nota est Antichristi; non Papa qui tot Provinciis exutus est, sed Lutherus Antichristus merito dici potest. That is to say, For from that time, when, as you will have it, the Pope began to be Antichrist, not only his Emple did not grow, but alwayes more and more it decreased. In the time of *Leo* the Great, that is, one hundreth and fifty years before Antichrist was brought forth, according to your opinion, the Pope of *Rome* was over moe Nations, than the bounds of the *Roman* Empire extended it self unto. And a little after, But in our times all things succeed so prosperously to him, that he lost a great part of *Germany*, *Swethland*, *Gothland*, *Norway*, whole *Denmark*, a good part of *England*, *Switzerland*, *Boheme*, &c. Therefore if prosperity be a note of Antichrist, not the Pope who is spoiled of so many Provinces, but *Luther* deservedly may be called Antichrist. Which words, by their own confession, bear out a great change upon their Popish Kingdom since the beginning of the Reformation, & a remarkable decay thereof since the expiring of the fourty two months before frequently mentioned

## LECTURE V.

Verf. 18. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man, and his number is six hundred threescore and six.

**H**AVING given more particular marks of Antichrist, he now biddeth them, as it were, put them together and reckon. The sum of the verse is, in these four, 1. There is an advertisement to put them to stand and pause before they pass these descriptions; *Here is wisdom*, &c. 2. An exhortation to reckon, that it may be known what that number is which the beast putteth on his followers; *Let him that hath*, &c. 3. A motive it may be understood and found out; for it is the number, &c. a help to find it out by mentioning a particular number 666. to shew it is not every Heretick, but a chief one, who will have many things compacted and bound up together, that is, Antichrist: or, it is not an innumerable number, but may be understood and counted as clearly as 666. may. So it is a confirmation of the former reason, or an instance for proof of it: for, some number was meet to be named, seeing he had called it attainable, yet not this very number it self, for then there needed no reckoning, and therefore the wisdom required is to be employed in searching and applying the characters past, and not the number following: and this looketh liker the scope of

that, *Here is wisdom*, putting the Reader to a pause, and to resume what is said now, before he pass from the description of the beast to the condition of the Church, which followeth, *Chap. 14. as, here is the patience of the Saints*, &c. relateth to the words and matter set down immediately before. This is the sum and scope.

This ver. then is set down by the holy Ghost as an exercise for spiritual wisdom to essay it self in. We cannot therefore pass it, though it hath tortured many in all ages to find it out: Before we come to reckon, we shal premit, 1. a short exposition of the words. 2. Some general considerations.

1. The pause or advertisement, *Here is wisdom*, doth imply a difficulty in the matter, needing spiritual wisdom for finding it out, yet so as in it, wisdom should have both an occasion and warrand for its exercise, and it is an invitation to try, as in these parallel places, ver. 9. of this chap. ver. 13. chap. 14. and ver. 9. chap. 17.

Only this is to be adverted to, that when he saith, *Here is wisdom*, the scope is not only to relate to what followeth, but also to cast an eye back on what immediately preceeded, as containing

containing the exercise of spiritual wisdom as well as in what followeth, and some way consists in knitting what preceedeth with what followeth, as the former cited places clear.

2. The exhortation, is, *Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast*: Where we consider, 1. What is to be counted. 2. What it is to count or number. 3. Who is this invited to it. By the *beast* here, no question, is understood the beast formerly mentioned through the Chapter, and by the *number of the beast*, that same which was formerly expressed by the *number of his name*: called there the *number of his name*, because it is something like himself in its nature. And this *beast*, as all the former, *vers.* 1. having a name of blasphemy, the number of that name must relate to a number of such peculiar blasphemies as differenceth this beast from all other Hereticks, such blasphemies as constituteth him Antichrist; and so the number of them must be such a proportion as constituteth the receivers thereof members of that Kingdom and Antichristian. It is here changed and called the *number of the beast*, though it signifie the same thing; partly, to shew the coincidence of this name with the beast, that it is proper and peculiar to him; and partly, because this number is invented by him and imposed on them, as the character is called his also. And therefore in the reckoning of this number, we are led rather to search in the nature of the *beast himself* than to a more particular name, because the thing to be reckoned, is here not called the number of his name, but the number of the beast, because by describing his nature, it doth consequently point him out as by name.

To count here, is not then by Arithmetick to number out of a name, and to cast up a sum by so many figures, but doctrinally and judiciously to weigh the matter of that heresie or the nature of that beast: so the Lord is said to have numbered *Belshazzar*, *Dan.* 5. and to have found him light. Because by this way of putting particulars together, and considering them, when put together, the judicious searchers will find him exactly out, whether he be agreeable or disagreeable to the rule or character given, as Arithmeticians will do by their reckonings. Of this sort of reckoning there are diverse examples in Scripture, but of reckoning from the letters or figures of a name there is none. The first implyeth a particular exact search, as if every thing in him were considered by it self particularly, and put together again in whole, as Arithmeticians do in their countings. This is confirmed by considering the qualification of him who is invited to number, *Let him that hath understanding*, that is, not understanding in reckoning and Arithmetick, but in the discerning of the spiritual truths of God, *Dan.* 12. and *Micah* 6. 9. especially of the characters of Antichrist formerly given, and of prudence to apply them where he shall discern them to be. This saith not that none other should count, the duty is common, but it saith few will take it to them and find it out, and that no other will come speed but they that take the same ballance of the Sanctuary and spiritual wisdom to discern with; yet it is put to mens doors to essay this, but with much deniednesse and humility.

3. The reason or motive added to stir up men to essay this search or reckoning, is, *for it is the number of a man*. By the *number of a man* we cannot understand such a number as is made up out of the numeral letters of a name; we have no Scripture warranting that: beside, that would be little encouragement to undertake this numbering, or little exercise for spiritual wisdom: but, by the *number of a man*, we understand such a number as men do use, or is made use of by them, and is attainable to be known by them, *Isa.* 8. 1. the *writing pen of a man*, that is, such as men use, and as men may understand; So, *Ezek.* 24. 17. the *bread of a man*, is bread made use of by them, and whereon they usually live: and (*Chap.* 21. of this Book) there is the *measure of a man*, that is, such as men

use to measure with: in this sense the *number of a man*, is that which men use, and is obvious if they have understanding to search it out: and certainly there is great odds to say the *number of a man* indefinitely, and the number of a mans name particularly. The first maketh it common to all spiritual men who may conceive it, as the exhortation implieth; This astricteth it to one particular man, as only agreeing to him. Thus the words may be rendered, It is the *number of man*; for there is no article in the original.

Or, by the *number of a man*, may be understood a number not having God but a man for its Author, and not being approved of God but invented of man, what ever there be pretended: thus there are in Scripture such phrases, the *wisdom of a man*, the *law of a man*, the *will of a man*, in opposition to the *wisdom, will and Law of God*, &c. Thus the reason runneth, let spiritual wise men consider her and reckon well, for it will be found that this beasts number or doctrine is not of God, but of man, whatever be pretended, even as that statue (*Dan.* 3.) might be called the Image of a man or of the King; not because it represented him, but because it was instituted by him. Neither of these will be disagreeable to the scope and truth.

4. The particular instance added, is, 666. We take this to signifie some indefinit number, that is, 1. great: and for the errors and blasphemies of Antichrist, that he presseth on his followers, are not of some few points, but of very many. 2. That they are subtilly compacted together, and have a dependance on each other, as that number 666. is. 3. That although they be compact and subtilly interwoven, yet they may be searched out. It is not impossible also that there might be some proverbial speech in that number, setting out a great number: sure it is ordinary in writers to say *six hundredeth more*, when their meaning is many more: and hence some have entituled their books *De sexcentis erroribus pontificiis*. However this number cannot be the particular number which is to be understood as the result of the reckoning; for then there needed no more counting, but it is a general instance for confirming the former reason; it is such a number as 666. is, i. e. attainable by mens industry: for, this number 666. is not to be gathered out of one word, but all concerning Antichrist is to be put together, which in its sum and result will amount to this great sum.

Secondly, The general considerations are, 1. The scope of this, is, by the reckoning of the number to come to the knowledge of the person, power, state or beast understood. Therefore the phrase is altered in this verse from the former: there, it was the number of *his name*; here, it is the number of *the beast*, because this being rightly counted and summed, it will be as easie to know who this beast is, as if we had his name in particular: it must be something then that differenceth him from others.

2. Yet the whole stresse of finding him out lieth not on this name, but on his name subjoynd to all the former characters, yea as a sum it must be drawn out of them as a result from them put together.

3. It would seem, that as the mark, or character and name, doth not point literally at one particular mark or name; so neither doth the number to a literal way of numbering, or any definit certain number: for this name is in the whores forehead, *Chap.* 17. 5. which, as in the former verse, cannot properly be understood: hence these phrases, *number of his name*, *vers.* 17: *number of the beast*, *vers.* 18. the *mark of his name*, *Chap.* 14. 11. a *victory over the beast*, and the *number of his name*, *Chap.* 15. 2. which are put indifferently, do import such a name as doth not so much consist in letters, as things and doctrines.

4. We will see these phrases put indifferently for one another, as the *number of the beast* and the *number of his name* 2. The *mark of the beast*, *vers.* 17. and the *mark of his name*, *Chap.*



*Chap. 14. vers. 11.* whereby apparently is holden forth, that as the beast and his name are of one nature, so also are the mark and number of the beast and of his name: and therefore what we find the one to be, the other must be of that nature, although there may be different degrees; and seeing the mark is something indigiting the interest of the beast in such a person who hath it, the number must be so also: for we conceive the number of his name, or mark of his name, is all one upon the matter, but is called the number of his name to shew the numberousness of his errors; The mark of it again, to shew the nature of them, which is to make some impression on them like him, as a seal leaveth its likeness in the wax.

5. Whether this number doth point at the beast, to wit, the Roman Empire as taken complexly, or as considered under this seventh head by the former types, it pointeth at one thing, and demonstrateth the same power as is sure; yet comparing it with the former verse, and the scope which is to describe Antichrist, it agreeth more properly to the seventh head as such a number which relateth to him; for, the mark is his, and so must the name and its number (as all the former descriptions do) belong to him also.

To come nearer, let us consider shortly what is the mark and name and so the number of the beast: It is certainly something not literally to be understood, but what maketh men in a special way to passe for this beasts followers, to wit, Antichrists, and to be accounted his; for, it is he that maketh them all receive this mark.

This mark seemeth to be a peculiar thing agreeing especially to Clergy-orders, and these who by oath are engaged to him, which is the most intimate fibness between him and any possible (for, it is opposit to the mark and seal of our Lord Jesus, whereby he setteth apart some for himself, and having such a wo peculiarly threatned against it, *Chap. 14. 9.* and *11.* and seeing it supposeth them to be specially imployed for him as Souldiers under his colours, it may well agree to them though not only) It may be the receiving and believing of these trumperies, that he (that is, that beast) proposeth; Not only having an outward profession of them, but an inward affection to them, delighting in and resting on that antichristian worship in its complex form and mould. Therefore it is called (*Chap. 14. 11.*) the mark of his name, that is, such a receiving of the name as hath an impression within and likeness to him.

2. By his name may be understood his doctrine and the publick acknowledgement of it, even as by the Name of God and Christ is understood the Truth of the Gospel, because in these and by these He maketh Himself known; and to make His Name known, is to preach His Doctrine and truth: and as the one hundred forty and four thousand, their having His Name in their foreheads, supposeth no visible character there but a distinction in their way from others, and a conformity to God in their walk, that who looketh on them and will try their way, it will be found they belong to God and profess His Truth; even so by the opposition, we may gather that this name of the beast is his doctrine as opposit unto Christs, whereby he is to be known and discerned as by a name: by his doctrine men may be fully perswaded of him, that it is he; and the taking on his name, is the taking on the publick profession of all these, and passing in this beasts reckoning as one of his, and so to be esteemed of by all others. In a word, it is a publick avowing of the antichristian doctrine and partaking of the name of blasphemy which is on him.

3. By the number of his name, must be understood something conform to that which is the name, which being put together, maketh it up as a sum drawn out of a particular reckoning, or, as letters and syllables make up a word, thus the number is in particular doctrines or errors, like so many distinct letters, the name is like a word made up of these put together. This we

take to be his characteristical tenents and doctrines laid together, that will amount to evidence and prove so much as this, that whosoever maintain such doctrines, is the Antichrist and beast here mentioned; But thus reckoneth wisdom, The Pope and Papists maintain such doctrines. *Ergo, &c.* And by this means, as by so many characters or letters, we come particularly to know him who is here obscurely described: And therefore it is called the number of the beast as well as of his name, because it is as well to find out the beast as to find out his name, this name being rather to describe his nature and find out this party than curiously to insist on a name, even as he is called (*Chap. 9. vers. 11.*) *Apollyon* and *Abaddon*, in respect of his nature and properties of tyrannic vented by him, this being the Spirits way to describe him by his nature rather than by letters; and so is the whore, (*Chap. 17.*) stiled by a name, signifying her nature, and gathered from her practice. In short, the thing we conceive intended here, is, 1. to propose the special and peculiar doctrines and tenents that agree to Antichrist, without which he will not acknowledge any for his. 2. By wisdom to see where these are owned and by whom, and so to come to apprehend that party as surely to be Antichrist, as if by name it were recorded.

If it be doubted what are the characteristical doctrines or errors that serve to point out Antichrist? *Ans.* 1. They must not only be different from the Truth of Christ, but in a strain and series destructive to His Truth, and inconsistent with the nature of His mediation, the end of His humiliation and sufferings, and Offices of King, Priest and Prophet. 2. They must be such as have some pretence to Christ, and do wrong Him under a shew of reverence given to Him, and so differ from the former heads. 3. They must differ from the tenents of other Hereticks, not in grossness so much as in nature; for, all are not the Antichrist, though they may be Antichrists. These particular differencing characters we conceive are fully set out in the former part of the Chapter, and he is to have not some but all (though it may be every person have not all) yet may they in general be instanced in some few heads, as most peculiarly agreeing to him and differencing him from others, as to consider the errors, not as in one person, but as in a Body or monarchick Kingdom, in respect, 1. of the complexness of his assumed power and Authority and his bringing all things to a dependance on that, and drawing in all under that head: not as an *Heresiarcha*, (as other Hereticks do make followers) but by pleading for a settled power and continuance of it, and for a worship due to him for his Authority: and upon this account, this assuming of power to himself above all that is called God, and making all to worship him, and driving that as the main thing with no lesse necessity to acknowledge him Christs general absolute Vicar than to acknowledge Christ Himself. This, both in this *Chap.* and *Chap. 9.* as also, 2 *Thess.* 2. seemeth to be proper to the Antichrist. I call this a special part or number of his name, because without this, none are admitted to be accounted his: Hence some may be grosse in many of his superstitions and idolatries (as many *Greeks*) yet by their schism of disowning him 700. years since, they are not under his number. Again, many *Dominicans* and others, will maintain many orthodox points of Doctrine, yet so long as the Popes Crown is not stricken at, his acknowledgement of them will not be denied. A second is, his changing all Religion in Doctrine and Worship to an other mould, different from the simplicity Christ left it in, a putting it in a more external glorious and pompous state more heathen like; that is called the making the Image of the first beast (in part) and the *Gentiles* treading under foot the holy City, *Chap. 11. 2.* 3. His doing all this by an usurped power and illimited Authority, multiplying traditions, ceremonies, and changing worship at his pleasure; which signe of proud self-exalting and walking by that principle seemeth

seemeth very peculiar to him, as the strain of this Chap. and 2 Thess. 2. sheweth. From these premises it may be solidly reckoned who is Antichrist, and to whom this name belongeth, thus,

That succession of persons, or that party, power or state in the world which succeedeth the Roman heathen Emperours in their seat at Rome, having no warrant for their Authority from God, but from the devil, who came in piece and piece after Idolatry was crushed to restore another sort of Idolatry in the place of it, and by whom the wound Idolatrous Rome got was healed, after whom all the world wondered, and whom they universally worshipped, willingly giving to him more than humane reverence, who boasteth of great power beyond any other in the world, and with liberty encroacheth upon Gods prerogatives, and wrongeth His Saints to His dishonour, whose rise beginneth at the Church fleeing to the wilderness, and continueth till the witnesses be killed, growing 1260. years, who maketh War for a long time against the Saints and overcometh and persecuteth the Godly that acknowledge him not, and he, who in doing all this, bringeth it about under pretext of a title to Christ, *vers. 11.* deluding the world by false miracles for gaining his point, and, by Sentences and Excommunications, presseth all the world to be in dependance on him, and so forth, as may be gathered from the former parts of the Chapter. He (I say) to whom all these agree, he is that Antichrist: for, this is a sure reckoning, *Cui competit definitio, ei competit definitum.* But spiritual wisdom will find all excellently well to agree to the Pope in his power, rise of it, exercise of it, continuance of it, means by which he came by it, and cloak under which he hid himself in coming to it, and in exercising of it: and therefore he is by this reckoning the Antichrist.

There are two other wayes of reckoning beside this, more common to Divines: The one whereof, is, from the letters of a name (which in Greek and Hebrew are numerals) to gather a name, including this number 666. in it. Some others reckon it to a set year after John writing the *Apocalyps*, as Daniel describeth Christs coming by so many years or weeks before He came: so here they make John to describe the time of Antichrists coming before he came. Of these two wayes which are followed by learned men, we shall speak a word afterward. It is considerable how ever we reckon it, that it still tryeth in one Person or State, to wit, the Pope: yet we think the former way we settled on safest. 1. as best agreeing to the scope, this being subjoyned at the back of such a particular description of Antichrist: now reckon (saith he) it is not impossible to find it out. And, 2. It is likest true spiritual discerning wisdom to gather from Doctrines rather than from letters, Divinity is more in these than in the orther. 3. It is most safe and convincing: for, one this way may fix on the Antichrist, and by no numeral name can he without this; and be his name what it will, if the thing be found, it evidenceth the thief who is to be apprehended as guilty; and the succession of this power to the sixth head of the wounded beast, and his getting the Dragons seat doth more clearly point at the state Civil he belongeth unto, than any name; such as *Λατίνος* can convincingly do: beside, *Λατίνος* will agree to heathen Rome or Christian; as well as antichristian, and so can be no differing name: and the word may be taken, thus. Now ye have gotten some; yea, many general characters of the Antichrist, any that hath wisdom lay them together, and see whom ye will find it to be, as the Lord, (*Dan. 9. 26.*) numbered *Belshazzar*, and found him light: not from the letters of his name, but from his practices. 4. This way of reckoning agreeth better with the opposition that is made to the Elect, *Chap. 14.* who have their fathers name in their foreheads which is certainly some publick profession or evidence of their adhering to him, being free from the pollutions of Antichrist. And there-

fore, on the contrary, this of Antichrists number, must be some deciphering of him in reference to his Doctrine, without which none are accounted his: especially, considering *vers. 2. Chap. 15.* it is something the Elect getteth a victory over. Therefore it must be some polluting thing, which no national name is. Also this as the mark is upon them that worship him rather than upon himself; yea, it is upon them all (for, they must bear the name, or, its number, *vers. 17.*) and it is such a thing as by birth they have not, yet by devoting themselves to him, may be attained; and such a thing, as the having thereof, freeth them of his censures, and giveth them liberty to his Market, as the want thereof doth make them obnoxious to his censures, as is clear, *vers. 17.* and it must be some such thing as constituteth them antichristian, and so consequently in him must be such a thing as constituteth him Antichrist; or, contrarily, the name and number in him, is somewhat essentially holding him out to be Antichrist (as our Lords essential attributes are comprehended under His name, and understood by it) Therefore, that name, or number, in them, must be such as constitutes them of that essence and body with him; for, it is derived from him to them, as the name of the Parent is to the Childe, or, of the Husband to the Wife; and by that which is derived, they become not only to be called his, but indeed to be his: it must therefore be such a thing as deriveth with his pollution and corruption to them that receive it, and which doth really difference and characterize his followers (*Chap. 13. 2.*) from the followers of the Lamb, and doth make them obnoxious to Gods Judgement as guilty. All which do evidence, that by this name and number of the beast, must be understood the things, Doctrines or practices of antichristianity, and not any numeral name personal or national.

*Ireneus* (much commended for the first reckoner of this number after he hath touched some particular names especially that of *Λατίνος*, which he accounteth most probable, he maketh a twofold general allusion in this number 666. without ascribing it to a definite number: the first, is, by comparing the coming of the flood under *Noah*, which was in the 600. year of his age, with that Image, *Dan. 3. 60.* cubits high and six broad: the 600. (saith he,) pointeth out defection at a height, as that of the Image pointeth out Idolatry in the highest degree. The second way he applyeth it, is by applying the first six to the defection of the first age of the World, the second to the second age, the third to the last age; and so to him these three, put together, do hold forth apostasie, defection and Idolatry in the greatest height as if all tryed together, *pag. 248. and 249.* which saith the reckoning of this number by a general allusion, is no lesse ancient than by a particular definite number of a particular name.

There is one thing yet to be cleared, without which all that is said seemeth to be manck, that is, what is the rise of mentioning this particular number 666. seeing that which is said could be clear without this? Or, what use can there be in this particular number in reference to the exposition given?

For clearing this, that it may be applied as having reference to the former general grounds, we may therefore consider this number 666. for application, 1. As a definite number for an indefinite, as the Lambs number of 144000. is, whereby is holden forth a great number, yet compactly joyned and united together. Thus the meaning is, his number is, 666. that is, the characters that he putteth on them that he counteth his, or the Doctrines he will have them to profess, are not some few errors, as may be in some other Hereticks, nor some steps wrong here and there, but all that he counteth his (whereby he may be known) must take such a considerable number and compact body of errors, at least, and profess them; which errors are in a certain method all casten together, and linked through other with an orderly like dependance



one upon another as that number 666. is; so as one thing being granted, many others will follow; and their fundamental grounds are like the 600. that include the 60. and 6. under them, that is, grant once the Pope to be the last Judge of controversies, traditions unwritten to be necessary, and the Scripture to be imperfect, the Pope to have supreme power, &c. and what worlds of consequences depend on these? Neither shall we for the time curiously enquire for more particular reasons of this number, but shall acquiesce in and content our selves with this general scope. We know learned men have profitably taken much pains in comparing this number, which is made up of multiplying sixes, with that of 144000. Chap. 14. which is made up of multiplying twelves; yet considering that the 144000. Chap. 14. is of the followers of the Lamb, and cannot be called the number of his name, and that this here must be understood of Antichrists impression upon each one of his Kingdom, we cannot see how they quadrat; and considering that there is very much subtilty in it, and that the other general way is more plain, and yet as sure, we conceive it needlesse to insist on it, leaving liberty to any to follow it or any other way whereby they may be edified.

For further confirming this general application, take these considerations. 1. That this number 666. is something which he putteth on his followers, and is rather that by which they are known, than by which he is known, except as he putteth it on them. This is clear from *vers. 17.* he causeth all men to receive this number as well as his mark: and therefore as we seek the mark and name rather among his followers than on himself (even as we do the Fathers name on the forehead of his followers) so must we do this number, as it were the least or easiest terms on which he will bargain for one to be privileged as one of his. 2. Consider that it is called his number, not because his own name giveth the account of it in a sum by its letters, but the beasts number is his, as before, the beasts mark, because he setteth it on; or, the Image of the beast was his because he made it and was the author of it, as was cleared: So it is his number, 1. Because particularly he condescendeth upon it, and will needs have such a number for his number, else he will not bargain; as it were, like the Apostles word, *1 Tim. 5. 9. Let none be received into the number under sixty years*, as if one would count sixty the Apostles number in this respect, because he will have none admitted under it. 2. It is his number, as having him for its author and no other as opposit to Gods appointment. 3. Consider that the scope and way of reckoning here seemeth, first, to propose this number 666. (whatever it be which is intended by it) and then from it, to conclude and gather who is this beast: the name is drawn from the number, and by it, as it were, by his name we come to know him, and the number is not drawn from the name: that supposeth we must first lay down the name and then reckon from it; this holdeth out a reckoning from the number, to find out the beast, as by that which may be soonest known to take up that which is more difficult: the other way supponeth folks first to know the name, and out of it to draw the number; but the scope is to lead us to find out the name by putting such numbers together. 4. Compare this with *Rev. 17. 5. and 9.* there is the name of the great whore, *M T S T E R Y, B A B Y L O N*, which is called her name, because her nature and the nature of the doctrines maintained by her, were such as held her forth to be another *Babylon*; and so here the name and number of it must be something suitable to Antichrists nature: Again, *vers. 9. here is wisdom*, which is a pause putting on to consider what followeth, as in dependence on what went before, Therefore must be something made up of both; and if this were to be reckoned numerically by a literal name, what would that which preceedeth contribute to this? or, where were the wisdom of comparing these together? Beside, we

will not find in Scripture any such reckoning laid upon letters or figures, although it be ordinary to reckon that a name, which describeth the nature and the essential properties of the person or party to whom they agree. Therefore upon these grounds we adhere to the former exposition as most safe.

If any should ask, why we are bidden rather to reckon his number than his mark, or name? *Ans. 1.* Because his number is more universal: all that hath his mark and name have his number, but all that have his number have not his mark and name; and because by searching this, we come to know his name, this is the right order of searching; yet if any think meet to reckon from a name, suppose *Λατίνος* in Greek, or *Λατίνος*, which almost since *John's* dayes hath been followed, as appeareth by *Ireneus*, who was hearer of *Polycarp*, disciple of *John*, *vid. lib. 5. adversus heres. Cap. 30. pag. 250. edit. Eras. Sed Λατίνος nomen, habet 666. numerum: & valde verisimile est, quoniam novissimum regnum hoc habet vocabulum, Latini enim sunt qui nunc regnant, sed non in hoc nos gloriamur*, that is, The name *Latinos*, hath the number of six hundred sixty six, and it is very like, for the last Kingdom hath that name, for they are Latines who now reign, but we shall not glory in this. Yet, the wisdom of God hath ordered so, that the sum or result of both reckonings turn to one, and pointeth at the same Antichrist hinted before; for, both the forenamed words completely exhibit that number 666. and point out the same party where the doctrines rested before. Neither will this destroy, but confirm our former exposition; for, this name is brought but as an accumulative argument and evidence of the Antichrist, Thus, he that hath all the characters of Antichrists doctrine, and hath a name, which in the numeral letters make up 666. he is Antichrist: But to the Pope, both these do agree: Only, as is formerly hinted, there is this odds, The name will not prove Antichrist without the other marks (for, it may agree to many) and the other marks will prove him without the name, for they can agree to no other, and are proper to him *quarto modo*.

Besides the former conclusion that this reckoning yeeldeth, to wit, that by this beast is clearly pointed out the Pope, for out of this Chapter may be reckoned a proposition, that who ever stands marked with these properties, is the Antichrist; But the story and knowledge of the Papacy, yeeldeth the assumption, that is to the Pope to whom all these will agree, *Ergo, &c.* Besides this, I say, these other conclusions may be drawn, 1. That the conceit of a Danitish Antichrist invented by Papists to vindicate their Pope, is foolish and vain. 2. That *Mahomet* is not the beast intended here. 3. That Antichrist is no open professed enemy, but a false counterfeited pretended friend. 4. That he is already come; and so must be the Pope.

1. To shew the vanity of that fond Antichrist, which they say shall be a Jew, one single person of the Tribe of *Dan*, from these two Scriptures, *Gen. 49. v. 17.* and *Jer. 8. v. 16.* exceedingly abused, which yet *Bellar.* dare not lay weight on; and that he shall come three years and an half before the end of the world, subdue all the world making himself a Monarch of it, sit in *Jerusalem*, be acknowledged by the Jews as their Messiah, build that Temple, do something miraculous, giving life as to an Image, making fire come down from Heaven, &c. and be destroyed by Christs second coming, &c. after he hath killed *Enoch* and *Elias*, whom they call the witnesses, *Chap. 11.* We oppose to that conceit these truths in this Chapter, 1. The time of Antichrists rise is immediately after the sixth head of the *Roman* beast is wounded, to wit, when Heathen Emperours are put from their throne: *Ergo*, it is long before the end, of the world. 2. The seat that Antichrist hath to sit on is the seat of the Dragon, to wit, that seat where the devil by *Roman* Emperours sate and persecuted the Church before; But that is not *Jerusalem*, but *Rome*, *Ergo, &c.* That therefore

therefore is a truth of *Chrysostoms*, that he sitteth in the Temple of God, that is, not at *Jerusalem*, but in the Church, pretending to have a prime place in it. 3. He is not one single person, he is the seventh head of this beast; yea, he is a beast; But by none of the former heads of the *Roman* Governours can be understood any single person, but a series of Governours in one state; likewise by beasts, are understood a series and not one single person, *Dan. 7. Ergo.* Antichrist is no single person. 4. His continuance is longer than forty and two moneths literally taken: which may be thus made out, 1. If his rise to his height be so slow and by so many degrees till he be up, and if his standing be so long as to bring and hold all the world under (and that by a sort of willing subjection) to fight with the Sainors, and overcome them, and other such things as cannot be done in such space; if also his decay and ruine be by a long tract of judgements as is under the vials, Then he must be of larger standing than forty and two moneths; But the former is true. *Ergo. &c.* 2. It is clear from this, that it beginneth so soon as the Churches fleeing, which is about *Ann. 300.* and continueth till the vials come, which comprehend the time of the six trumpets, which certainly are more than forty and two moneths: for, the vials do bring the first judgements on him. 3. If his time had been no longer than forty and two moneths, it had been no great argument for *Paul* (2 *Thess. 2.*) to prove that the day of judgement was not near, if forty and two moneths had been the longest time of his reign; for, that was *Paul's* Argument, The man of sin is not revealed, therefore it is not at hand, for, that could only have proved it was not within three years and an half. 5. He is to be discovered before the end: for, the first vial cometh on them that have his mark; and (*Chap. 14.*) they are threatened by publick preaching with judgement before it come.

2. For *Mahomet*, this cleareth him also not to be that *antichrist*. 1. This Antichrist hath horns like the lamb, sitteth in the Temple of God, looketh like Christ; but so is not *Mahomet*, who was never a Christian. 2. This Antichrist sitteth at *Rome*, and by a new sort of Idolatry healeth the wound the sixth head had gotten, i. e. by worshipping Idols, Images, &c. But *Mahomet* abhorreth that, and pretendeth to worship one God only. 3. This Antichrist doth great signs and wonders; But *Mahomet* claimeth to none and pretendeth no signs, but to cover that, saith, that Christ was sent with signs, and he

with a sword. 4. This Antichrist carrieth on and driveth all his designs under a resemblance of making use of Christs power (as having horns like the lamb) and by a pretext of and claim unto a vicarship and deputation from him, so doth not *Mahomet*.

3. Hence also we may conclude, that Antichrist is no open opposer or denier of Christ to be Christ, or one that calleth himself Christ, but an intruder of himself in what is Christs due, to His prejudice: for, 1. he hath horns like the lamb, which importeth a counterfeiting of him. 2. He hath miracles, which certainly are in imitation of the Apostles, who did them in the name of Christ. 3. He deceiveth the world, which cannot be done by a direct denying of Christ to be Christ, or the Messiah in word, especially if his standing be for three years and an half only. 4. He is called the false prophet, which implieth him not to have counterfeited himself to be Christ, but to have commission from Him, which he hath not. Beside, if Antichrists doctrine and profession were so direct and grosse, there needed not so many marks to know him, nor wisdom to search him out, it could not but be palpable to all, who were the Antichrist. Again, many in all ages opposed Christs Person and Natures, and were indeed Antichrists in a general notion, as *John* saith in his Epistles; yet were not the Antichrist: yea, some have called themselves Christ, yet were not the Antichrist. It can be therefore no differencing mark which agreeth to mee. Beside, his apostasie being a mysterie, and then working, it is not like to be so palpable.

4. We conclude, that Antichrist is come and not to come, seeing the sixth head is wounded, the woman hath fled and her children taken up to Heaven: which was after her freedom from Heathen persecution. Beside, either the Church hath been this long time, put under the Dragon, or flood, or this Antichrist; but not under the former two. Therefore this time past hath been antichristian, seeing there is no interval between these conditions of the Church. Again, if all these characters be fulfilled; Then Antichrist must be already come; But the former is truth, as hath been seen in the exposition. *Ergo, &c.*

5. It remaineth therefore, as was formerly concluded, that the Pope is the very Antichrist, and the papacy the very antichristian Kingdom here described. Of these conclusions more may be seen, *Chap. 17.*

## LECTURE I.

### CHAP. XIII.

Verf. 1. **A**Nd I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred

40. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

3. And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders; and no man could learn that song, but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

4. These are they which were not defiled with women: for they are virgins: these are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth: these were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God, and to the Lamb.

5. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God,





He former Chapter described Antichrist's rise and height. This Chapter setteth, in a little view, his ruine and the Churches recovery from his tyrannie, which is subjoyned, partly for clearing the Churches condition during that tyrannie, which is from the beginning, to *vers. 6.* partly, to shew her first strugglings and contests with him, whereby he is discovered, and the opposition by word tabled to *vers. 13.* or *14.* partly, to give a little view of carrying on this begun contest till Antichrist be ruined, unto the end of the Chapter, under two types of an harvest and vintage, which are to be accomplished. So the Chapter hath these three parts, The 1. setting out the Churches estate in a defending or defensive posture, relating to her low condition past, and clearing that posture which she was in when Antichrist was high. The other two do point her out in a fighting posture, 1. by words, 2. by deeds: this is more fully set out under the vials, and is insert here to comfort Gods people against that storm of Antichrist which was then to come.

For clearing of the exposition and application of this first part, we conceive it relateth unto the Church, before Antichrists ruine be sensibly begun, or, at least, be any way carried on: for, 1. the number here are the same with *Chap. 7.* 144000. which number is sealed for the time of Antichrists trial; and after that trial is past, an innumerable number doth appear, *vers. 9.* of that *Chap.* This first part belongeth then to that state of the Church, while it consisteth of the sealed number, *Chap. 7. vers. 9.* The two last parts of this Chapter do belong to that of *Chap. 7.* which followeth from *vers. 9.* to the end. 2. This is further clear here by what followeth, *vers. 6. &c.* The Gospel is then, after Antichrists discovery sent abroad through the world to encrease the number of the Lambs followers; But this followeth and beginneth the second part of the Chapter, *vers. 6.* Therefore this first part must preceed that time of the Preaching of the Gospel whereby the Church is enlarged.

2. Although some way this doth represent the Church in her night and wilderness-condition, yet we think it especially relateth to her condition immediately before the day break, and to that which is next the morning: For, 1. she is now visible, the Professors stand on mount Sion, they have their Fathers name now visible in their profession, which (*Chap. 7.*) when they were first sealed, was not discernable, now it kytheth. 2. The whole sealed number is now compleat, and the one hundred forty and four thousand are together, and they have songs; yea, a new song, which importeth a great part of their strait to be over: now she appeareth to be what she was before, though lurking and unseen: and this probably may relate to the appearing of the *Waldenses* and *Bohemians*, who belonged indeed to the suffering state of the Church before Antichrists moneths expired; yet immediately before the Gospels spreading and Reformations growth, they appeared with more publick professing and owning of the truth (as it were again in their foreheads) than had been many years before, upon which followed a further spreading and growth of the light of the Gospel.

This Church is described three wayes by *John*, First, as taken up by his sight, *vers. 1.* Secondly, by his ear or hearing, by what he heard as well as by what he saw, *vers. 2. 3.* Thirdly, by reason, in describing the properties and qualifications of these he had so discovered, he more fully holdeth forth what they were, *vers. 4. 5.*

*I looked* (saith *John*) and *lo.* This is a preface, to difference this part of the vision from the former, and to shew some consideration in the things that were represented to him; and it containeth the state of the Church then, in these

four, 1. They are described by their head, *I looked, and lo a Lamb stood, &c.* By this *Lamb*, no question, is understood Christ, though the article be not prefixed: for, the word, *his Father*, pointeth this *Lamb* to be the Son. Our Lord is called a *Lamb*, partly for His meeknesse in bearing so long with His enemies, partly to distinguish Him from and oppose Him to the two horned beast, (*Chap. 13. 11.*) that appeared like Him. Would *John* say, I saw after this the true *Lamb*, who is indeed the *Lamb*, as if for a time He had not been discernable. And He is said to be on *mount Sion*, to expresse His care of His Church, even then when the former beast took all on him in Christs name: yet this *Lamb* had not laid it by, nor committed it to him, but retained still His watchful oversight of His Church, though for His own good reasons He delayed the inflicting of vengeance on her enemies: in these respects He is said to be *standing*, to expresse both His watchfulness and tendernesse, *Micah 5. 4. Act. 7. 34.* This sheweth the Church was not frightened by *Antichrist*, even under *Antichrist*: He is there and standing there; as *sitting* doth expresse His dominion, this doth His care.

2. The state of these Believers is set down in respect of the place where they appear, it is on *mount Sion*, where our Lord stands and they with Him: by this is meant the Church, whereof *mount Zion* was a type, *Psal. 48.* and *Psal. 125.* for strength, beauty and the fixing of the worship of God: their thus appearing on *mount Zion*, is in opposition to their being hid in the Temple, *Chap. 11. 1.* They are now as it were drawing out; and Christs appearing here, is His appearing by some visible Ordinances and Worship amongst them: In a word, saith he, my eyes was taken off the enemies of the Church to behold her, and I saw that Christ wanted not a Church, neither was the Church destitute of His care but both are represented here, though for a long time both were little seen.

3. They are set out in their number, to wit, 144000. relating to that *Chap. 7.* First, to shew they were just so many as were sealed, and none of these were wanting, the effect had holden good on them all; and their sealing was not for nought. Secondly, to shew that the number kept clean after a strait, and that decreed of God for that end, will be alike. Thirdly, to shew that that time is at a close now: for, the 144000. which were brought in successively, are now compleated: in all which, Gods faithfulness doth kyth.

4. They have *his fathers name written in their foreheads*, that is, a profession of Gods truth, as a seal bearing out to whom they belonged, they thinking now no shame of owning Him. In a word, I saw that number bearing out his mark and burn-iron on them, looking otherwise than all the rest of the world that had a different name upon them: by which they are certainly opposed to these, mentioned, *Chap. 13. 17, 18.* Or, more plainly, this number, in this posture waiting on the *Lamb*, is certainly opposed to the number that followed the counterfeit beast and received his name; Christ to Antichrist, His followers to his worshippers. The name also is opposed, whereby it appeareth there is some light to be gotten in clearing the one for clearing the other. Secondly, This state of the Church is set out by what *John* heard: as the first, by his looking and seeing, setteth them out in their appearance and profession; So, 2<sup>d</sup> this of hearing, setteth them out in their practice. The third setteth them out as they were indeed before God real Converts, Elected, Redeemed, Called, Justified and Sanctified.

This practice that he heard, is in general, singing and praising, partly following the allusion used in the dramattick form of this Book by interludes of singing, &c. partly to shew the heart-somnesse and real worth of Christs followers, singing and glorifying Him in the fires, *Isa. 24. 15.* partly, to point out the cheerful effect and blessed change that was now coming and at hand.

This

This singing and practice of theirs, is more particularly set forth in these five, 1. the place from whence, *from heaven*, that is, the Church, as *Chap. 4. and 5.* Or, it may be to set out the joy in heaven at the Church appearing again on mount Zion. However these 144000. learned this song and joyed in it: possibly it is both, as in *Chap. 5.* 2. In its manner, it is a *voice like waters, thunders and harpings.* *Waters* make a great noise, See *Rev. 1. 15. Ezek. 1.* This sheweth the loudness of their cry, it was now heard, *Rev. 19. 6.* *Thunderings* shew a vehemency and terribleness in the sound, or powerfulness, as *Psal. 29.* that sheweth goodwill in their crying. *Harpings* shew cheerfulness in the singers and harmony in what was plaid or sung: all three put together, they shew a sound in the Church, which had the word of God both loud, powerful and comfortable, and that these professours were not dumb and silent nor jarring, but now they are both seen and heard, and it is pleasant both to see and hear them.

Thirdly, In *vers. 3.* they are set out by the matter of their song, It is a *new song*: now looking not to Christ to come, but as come, so differing from the old song of the Fathers, See *Chap. 5.* *New* also in respect of a new reason and matter by a new mercy, *Psal. 40. 3.* and so this may be new as looking to Christ's care of them in their (almost now) bypast strait, so different from that, *Chap. 5.* which for opening the seals was sung. 4. This song is *before the Throne, Elders and beasts*, that is, publicly, as these represent a publick Church-state, as *Chap. 4.* Now it is in the Congregation, or *before the Throne, &c.* that is, they made good mulick before God, and in the approbation of His people, though the world understood it not and thought nothing of it. So these are looked on as contradistinguished from the world. They had the glad tydings of the Gospel that made them merry, but the world was incapable of that joy. 5. This song is described by this, *that none in all the world that heard it, could take it up, or joyn in it, but these redeemed ones*: whereby it appeareth to be yet a time of ignorance, when the Gospel was kept up from the world; and also it holdeth forth, that it is a special privilege to understand the Gospel, and that naturally men are incapable of it: in a word, it is this, the Church that I saw was in this condition, that it was singing cheerfully and merrily: Antichrists persecution could not mar nor take their joy from them; that was such a song and mirth as was not carnal or natural, but spiritual, of a new nature; and therefore they sing this song alone; none could sing nor perceive nor understand that which comforted them, or kindly blessed God for it, but such as had some experience of it; they had it given them to learn this mystery, which none other had: and, as propheticall, it saith, that though the Church of Christ peeped out for a considerable time in the *Waldenses* here and there, and that they suffered joyfully, (which indeed they did) yet few were capable of that joy and did joyn with them. One thing is to be cleared, Whether by these singers be understood these sealed ones, or others, distinct from them? *Ans.* Whether we say the one or the other, it will be one thing: for, if these first singers be distinct, yet these 144000. learn the song, and joyn both in the matter of it, and manner of singing: so in the use, it will be applicable to the Church at that time. 2. Though it be understood of these 144000. yet may these phrases of singing before the Throne of God and the Elders be well understood, either as their doing this publicly, as is said; or, especially, as acceptable to God, as by these in Heaven: it may be also that the Angels and Saints triumphant are brought in here singing, with whom the 144000. sealed ones joyn and agree; yet the scope and connexion with what followeth, will agree as well to understand it of the militant Church; and that Angel mentioned *vers. 6.* called another, may be in reference to them and other Ministers (for so these Angels following seem to be under-

flood) as well as to another Angel properly. 3. They are described by their special privileges, properties or characters, in number five. The first is general and comprehensive of all, as the ground and sum of them all, to wit, that they are the redeemed of the Lord. 1. They are *redeemed from the earth*, that is, not only bought by the blood of Christ, and so in that bargain of Redemption differenced from others; (which sheweth it is no little thing to make that difference) but also by effectual calling differenced from the profane earthly multitude and redeemed from their vain conversation to serve the Lord in holiness, *1 Pet. 1. 18.*

The second property is, *vers. 4. they are not defiled with women, for they are virgins.* By *virgins* here are not understood such as have kept themselves from all conjugal fellowship: for by these Virgins are understood all the true Church under Antichrist; and will any say there were none Redeemed amongst all the Married of that time? Beside, it is such a Virginitie as is opposite to defilement (which Marriage is not) yea, so the defilement mentioned here. Neither, Secondly, by *defilement* here, is understood bodily fornication, (for there may be many other lusts beside) but spiritual fornication, to wit, Idolatry and superstition, and communicating with such worship: which is clear, 1. From the opposition between defilement with women and virginitie, as if there were no midst or another lust, which is only truth in spiritual whoredoms and virgin chastity in being kept to Christ. 2. That which followeth, is, *they follow the Lamb*: it is such a defilement then as is opposite to spiritual adhering to Christ. 3. The scope cleareth it, in that he is here describing Christs pure worshippers; it keepeth the phrases of this Book, especially these wherein Antichrist and his worship is set down: he is called the whore, *Chap. 17.* and it, whoring, and committing fornication with her, See *vers. 8.* of this same *Chap.* Again, Christ is called a husband, and faithful adhering to Him is called chastity, *2 Cor. 11. 2.* Faith eng'geth, as by a marriage-knot and vow, to be peculiar to Christ; Idolatry and superstitious worship sinneth against that Covenant, prostituting men to some other thing in His room; and that is the reason of this allusion, frequent in the Old Testament as in the New.

3. They *follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.* This sheweth, 1. an adhering to Christ on any terms, and in all trials, cost what it may, they follow faithfully. 2. A painfulness in following through all duties, hazards, and possibly places, that if he go to the wilderness they will go with Him, alluding to that, *Gen. 2.* (in opposition to the former whoring) that a wife or married party shall forsake all and cleave to her husband; so did these sealed ones, constantly and solely adhere to Christ and follow Him as their Husband. 3. It importeth, upon Christs side, that He is tyed to no place or particular Church, as *Rome, Constantinople* or any other, but may transfer His Ordinances and Candlestick where He pleaseth (for, the Lamb's presence here spoken of, is His presence by Ordinances and Church-communion) elsewhere, where He thinketh good; so it importeth, upon the other side, the temper and inclination of these Virgins, that they are addicted to no place particularly, bounding Christ or seeking Him there, so that if he be not there, they will not go elsewhere to seek Him (as Antichrists fornicatours, in opposition to these, may be gathered to do, who will not go out of *Rome* after him) nay, but they go with Him and follow Him, weighing His presence not by places or external privileges, but by the evidences thereof in His Ordinances; and where He setteth up these, there, wherever it be, they seek Him and acknowledge Him present.

The fourth property is also set down, *vers. 4.* These were *redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God, and to the Lamb.* This redemption pointeth at Gods waiting them out amongst others of that time, and the end and scope of it,



to wit, to be the first fruits unto him, alluding to that custom of the Jews paying first fruits unto the Lord : whereby they are holden forth to be, 1. as holy and set apart for that use and end, 2. as being the forerunner and earnest of a coming greater harvest : in both which senses, it may be here. 1. They were holy to God, when all the world was profane ; so all Believers are called first fruits unto God, *Jam. 1. 18. Jer. 2. 3.* Thus it is the privilege He called them unto. 2. As these now appearing go before and foretell, as it were, great number and harvest that were coming, and to follow unto the Lord throughout the earth, (See *cap. 7. 9.*) even as the first fruits were an evidence and pledge of an approaching harvest, so were these to God and the Lamb. And thus their redeeming from amongst men, will be here their separating by effectual calling, as that before, (*vers. 3.*) is their general redemption. The last property, is, *vers. 5. In their mouth was found no guile : for they are without fault before the Throne of God.* The scope is this, to shew their sincerity in opposition to the hypocrisy of that time, 1. There is no guile in their mouth, i. e. no dissembling or counterfeiting, as is said of Nathanael : They are all Nathanaels, *Joh. 1. 47.* and like that blessed man, *Psal. 3. 22. In whom there is no guile :*

they are as they profess, seriously adhering to God in Christ, whose name they bear out in their profession, and are not counterfeit Christians, as Antichrists followers are, to whom they are opposed : and in which respect, they are said to be without fault, i. e. the faults these were guilty of, as was said before. 2. This sincerity is proven ; or, it is hinted wherein it consisteth : for, saith he, They are without fault before the Throne of God. In a word, they are justified and absolved by God, and have His testimony, and therefore they are sincere : which expression, before the Throne of God, importeth two things, 1. Sincerity, as it is opposed to mens judging, who cannot see so far as God. 2. It looketh to the ground of their acceptance, which is not any righteousness of their own (for upon that account none living will be justified in his sight, *Psal. 143.*) but the righteousness of Christ, that is the ground of their absolution before God. In a word, they were indeed sincere and through Christs blood washen and absolved, *Chap. 7. vers. 14.* By all which it appeareth, they are really sanctified and justified who are meant here, being no hypocrite, never so well painted, can be without fault before God.

## LECTURE II.

*Verf. 6. And I saw another Angel flie in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.*

*7. Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come : and worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea and the fountains of waters.*

**I**N the preceeding part of the Chapter there is a little hint given of the estate of the Church, when Antichrist was at his height, she was in a defensive posture.

In the second part of the Chapter, (from *vers. 6.* and forward) the state of the Church is described after its beginning to be active and to come out of the secret wilderness wherein she was hid, and it hath two parts, to the end of the Chapter. In the first, the Church is set out encountering with the attempts of Antichrist in lighter skirmishes by the Word, labouring to discover his treachery and Idolatry, and so to bring men out of his snare : and this is done by three several Angels, to the 13. *vers.* every one of them more clearly speaking to the ruine of Antichrist, and threatening judgment on him and his followers than the former. In the second part, from *vers. 13.* to the end, when advertisement by the Word doth not the business, the Lord cometh in by deeds, and falleth about the perfecting of what was threatened by the former three Angels : which is set down in two similitudes, whereby he finisheth the execution of his wrath.

These three Angels come out after the darkness of Antichrist ; to spread the everlasting Gospel, and to preach the righteousness of Christ : for, the sending of Ministers and the encreasing of the Church go together and are tryed together. The first, in the 6, and 7. *vers.* hath this mainly in commission, to allure souls from Antichrists flattery to the faith and obedience of Christ. The second, in the 8. *vers.* cometh and foretelleth the destruction of spiritual Babylon, or Rome ; and because he would have them certainly believing it, he speaketh of it as a thing already done. The third, in the 9, 10, and 11. *vers.* cometh to denounce Gods fearful judgement against Antichrist and all that should take his mark, that if they would

not be allured by the Gospel, they might be scared by the plagues and judgments that were to come on him from following him. This is the sum of these three Angels preaching. If it be asked, to what time this relateth ? though we will not be peremptor to determine, yet we think it looketh rather to the spreading of the Gospel about, or in the days of Luther, than to any time before.

*Reason 1.* Because the state of the Church, before the rise of the Gospel, is described before to be low, and this spreading of the Gospel succeeding to that low estate, it must look to her flourishing condition.

*Reason 2.* Because the universal extent of this first Angels commission, is such that we cannot so well apply it to any other time before that ; It is to all Tongues and Kindreds, which only was fulfilled then, and is in opposition to the former restraint.

*Reason 3.* Because after the first Angels preaching the everlasting Gospel, there is an immediate succession of one after another, still without interruption carrying on this ruine : we take it therefore most probably to relate to the spreading of the Gospel after Antichrists begun ruine : for, till then, the Church was in the wilderness, and the witnesses are few and in sack-cloth.

In the first Angels preaching, we have these four, 1. The Instrument, an Angel. 2. The posture he is in, flying in the midst of heaven. 3. His business or work, to preach the everlasting Gospel to them that dwell on the earth. 4. His message or the sum of his preaching, *vers. 7. fear God, &c.*

For the first, That the instrument is called an Angel, it is not properly to be taken : for, the Angels are ministering Spirits, sent forth to minister for them that are heirs of Salvation, *Hib.*

*Heb. 1. ult.* but they have not the everlasting Gospel to preach. This treasure is put in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, *2. Corin. 4. 7.* and he hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, saith the Apostle, *2 Cor. 5. 18.* and it is common to all Ministers to be called *Angels*, as *Chap. 2. and 3. and Chap. 1. ver. 20.* of this same Book; so we take the word here to hold out the Lords making use of a Ministry after the darkness of Antichrist, to spread the Gospel; and the Ministers are called *Angels*, because they are Gods messengers, intrusted by him with a high and heavenly employment; and it is a title that should put Ministers in mind of their duty, to do Gods will on earth as the Angels do it in heaven, in a spiritual and heavenly way, cheerfully, willingly and readily; and it should put people in mind of their duty, to take this word off Ministers hands, as from Angels. *2. Angel* here, in the singular number, is not one Minister; for in the lowest condition, the Church was in, as *Chap. 11.* she had two witnesses, and she behoved to have more now when the Gospel is rising and to be published abroad; but we are to take the word collectively: and it is no extraordinary thing, when the Lord would speak of more Ministers nor one, to speak of them as one; and it implieth no singularity or superiority in one over the rest, See *Chap. 1. ver. 20.*

For the second, the posture he is in, *It is fleeing through the midst of heaven*, as is spoken of another Angel, *Chap. 8. 13.* The Lord is now to shew that he will not keep his Church and Gospel, as it were, hid in a corner, or in the Temple, as *Chap. 11. ver. 1.* nor on mount Zion, though that be more publick, but he will send out his Ministers conspicuously, as it were in the open view of all, to preach his Gospel to all the world. And he is called *another Angel*, as contradicting distinguished from that number of the true Church, mentioned in the former part of the Chapter. The Lord having a new task and a new piece of work, he provideth himself of new Ministers, and it may be, some out from among Antichrists followers, and none of these who stood on mount Sion: of such did the Lord make use in the beginning of the Reformation, to preach and to be instrumental for him, who were not of the *Waldenses* or *Albigenses*, but drawn from the midst of Popery.

For the third, his errand or work, is, *to preach the everlasting Gospel to them that dwell on the earth, and that to every Nation, and Kindred, and tongue, and People*, wherein, we have

1. His work.

2. The object or extent of it.

1. His work, is, *the preaching of the everlasting Gospel*: we need not tell you what the Gospel is, or what the word signifieth, it is that that the Angel hath to the shepherds, *Luk. 2. 10.* *good tidings of great joy*; and it is called the *glad tidings of salvation*, because it is eminently and excellently beyond all comparison, the gladdest news that ever were made mention of to sinners: and the word *Gospel*, is drawn from an old Saxon word, that signifieth *Gods-spel*, such a word to man as is the best word that ever was heard of; there is none to it: And it is called *everlasting*, for these reasons, 1. From the rise of it, from everlasting in Gods eternal plot and purpose. 2. From the effect, it bringeth life and immortality to light, *2 Tim. 1. 10.* and *1 Pet. 1. ult.* It is said *the word of the Lord endureth for ever*; the effect and efficacy of it never endeth. 3. It is here called the everlasting Gospel, in opposition to the Papists calumny, who enquire, where was our Church and Gospel before such a time? and to charge the Gospel at its reviving, with novelty, because differing from their traditions, which for a time had obscured it, as if it had been buried: now what is preached, is the ancient everlasting Gospel, although it be of new revived; and the Angel is here said to have the everlasting Gospel, according to that word, *2 Cor. 18.* *He hath given, or committed, to us the word of reconciliation*; He is made a

steward of it, which designeth and denoteth an office, he hath not so given it to the community or multitude, but hath committed it to such and such Angels.

2. The object or extent of it, is generally, *to all that dwell on the earth, and to every Nation, Kindred, and Tongue, and People*, as if he said, the Gospel is not now to be sent to some few, as in the dayes of Antichrists prevailing, but to be manifested to all sorts of People of whatsoever Kindred, Tongue or Nation: And it is by vertue of this commission, that so many Nations and we at this day enjoy this Gospel.

The fourth or last thing, is his message, or sum of his preaching, more particularly set down, *saying with a loud voice*, implying great boldness to be in these Ministers as was in our first Reformers. His meaning is, they should not by whispering do it, but with great authority and boldness should publish the Gospel.

The preaching it self, hath three heads, and a reason is annexed to persuade unto the first two. The first is, *Fear God*. The second is, *Give him glory*: the reason annexed, *for the hour of his judgement is come*. And the third and last head, is *And worship him that made heaven and earth, &c.* These three look to the three great parts of Religion, opposit to the three faults that the followers of Antichrist are given to. The first looketh to the regulating of men in their inward frame; the second in their Faith; the third in their external worship.

1. *Fear God*. This regulateth our fear as to its object, to wit, God; which supposeth now, that many things have been feared by the world more than He: also it sheweth, that outward service will not do it, there must be a right principle within; and so it is opposit to prophanity and hypocrisy, fear of men and Antichrists curfings, which should from this forth be left feared.

2. *Give him glory*. The giving of God glory is divers ways taken, according to his divers Attributes; but we take it here to look mainly to the giving of him the glory of His Grace, in resting by Faith on Christ alone, as the only Mediator and Saviour, so renouncing all others, as it is said of *Abraham*, *Rom. 4. 20.* he was strong in Faith, giving glory to God; and *Hos. 11. 7.* though they called then to the most high, none at all would exalt him, none would give him the glory of his Grace by believing; for, as the rejecting of the Gospel, is a despising of God; so the receiving of the Gospel is a giving him glory. Reason 1. Because the glory of Grace, is especially the glory which the Gospel holdeth out. 2. Because this meeteth especially with Antichrists dishonouring of him, by giving the glory due to him to other things, Saints, Angels and mens own works, and in not resting on his Mediation, Intercession and Satisfaction alone; and this cometh nearest the scope.

The reason persuading to these two, *for the hour of his judgement is come*: which being compared with a word, *Acts 17. 30.* *The times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men every where to repent*, the force of the argument is this, beware now of giving the glory of Gods Grace in a Mediator to other things; for though God hath spared men a while in the times of ignorance and darkness, He will not do so now when the light is broken up, but will send suddain judgements on the despisers of the Gospel; and many Churches that have not made use of the Gospel, find this true this day.

2. It is called *the hour of his judgement*, to teach us, that as God hath a set time for all things, so hath he a peculiar time for judgement; and as for all sinners, so for these that follow Antichrists way; and also that often the hour of preaching the Gospel, hath the hour of judgement waiting on it, if it be abused.

The third head of his Preaching, is, *And worship him that made heaven and earth*. This looketh to their external worship,



as if he had said ye have been worshipping stocks, idols and images of gold & silver; vanities that cannot profit you, now beware of continuing any longer in that way. but worship the alone living and true God, who is thus described, that he made heaven and earth the sea and fountains of waters, even as the Apostle speaketh, *Acts 14. 15. We preach to you, that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all things that are therein.* almost in the same words: and this cleareth that these exhortations are set down in opposition to the way they look before, while they were following Antichrist.

God is thus described here; 1. That they may see the vanity of worshipping any other than God, and that they had just reason and cause of worshipping Him. 2. To point out the obligation that lieth on men to give him the worship and glory due unto him; he made the heaven and the earth, therefore he is a glorious and powerful God. All this preaching is by way of application, and practical, because this is the scope of preaching, to put on to holiness and practice; and this is the right manner, when simply and plainly it is pressed on the conscience, without the curious conceits questions and useless cases used under Antichrist.

## LECTURE III.

*Verf. 8. And there followed another Angel, saying. Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*

*9. And the third Angel followed them saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand.*

*10. The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture, into the cup of his indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy Angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:*

*11. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever. And they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.*

**C**hrist hath now begun to send out his light into the world, and though by many it getteth no good welcome, yet he goeth on and sendeth out others to denounce and foretell more clearly the ruine of that antichristian Kingdom, that formerly had deluded the world: By this Angel, understand, as formerly, Ministers stirred up after the first outbreking of the Gospel, who, perceiving *Romes* perverse opposing of the preached Gospel, and seeing what shaking Christ by the first beginnings had wrought on his kingdom, the more boldly and plainly foretell the ruine of that state now to be approaching.

The preaching of this Angel containeth two things, 1. The denunciation of *Babylons* judgement. 2. The cause of it. In the denunciation, Consider the object threatened, *Babylon*. 2. The judgement, *is fallen*. 3. The manner of expression, it is in the by-past time and doubled. By *Babylon* here, is certainly understood some particular state, and the head of some such great state as was opposit to the Church: for, (*Chap. 18.*) there are many of her followers, who still regrave her fall. More particularly, we conceive it to be understood of *Rome*, not so much the Town as its dominion, being now headed with Antichrist, and as it were, the head of this Empire: for it is the same, called MYSTERY BABYLON, *Chap. 17. 5.* that is mystically *Babylon*, as before, *Chap. 11.* spiritually *Sodom* and *Egypt*. And to *Rome* only agreeth the description following, 1. *The great city*; so is *Rome* set out for its sovereignty, *Chap. 17. 18.* Called *Babylon* by analogie, 1. It was the head city over that Empire, which of old oppressed the people of God; So is this now. 2. That Empire was not oppressing outwardly only, but Idolatrous also and enticing others to it, as (*Dan. 3. &c.*) may appear. 3. As in *Babylon* the people of God were kept under, yet had a being amongst the *Babylonians*; even at *Babylon*, though not of them; so was the true Church captivated by this Church of *Rome*, yet had some being under and amongst them, though wanting outward beauty.

2. The judgement denounced on this Antichristian state of *Rome*, is, *It is fallen*, whereby two things are holden out, 1. That *Babylon* was no more surely destroyed, than *Rome* should be finally and totally. 2. That it was now begun to fall, and that it should never after this be in such a settled condition as it was in before, but its fall was approaching, and this Gospel by the preaching of the Angel, had discovered *Romes* nakedness and made her loathsome to the intelligent, and the coming judgement under the types of harvest and vintage, should perfect it.

3. The manner of expressing this, is, as if it were already past, and it is doubled; Both which tend, 1. To shew the certainty of the thing spoken. 2. The imminency and surprising celerity of it. And, 3. the concernment of it, to make men take the more notice of it as a great thing, alluding also to the manner of denouncing Gods judgement on old *Babylon*, *Isai. 21.* The cause of this fore destruction on *Babylon*, is figuratively set down in the words following: In short, it is because she allured souls of all sorts from Gods pure worship to communicate in her superstitious and Idolatries, which before the Lord is as adultery and fornication spiritually in respect of its pollution and Covenant breaking with God.

By this comparison, or allusion to the manner of vile strumpets, who entice to filthiness, is holden out, 1. *Romes* censure, who as an harlot; had broken Faith to Christ. 2. Her guilt in enticing others; yea, many to that superstitious way with her, and prevailing. 3. The more she entice to be her followers, it is the greater ditrey; *she made all nations to drink*. 4. The nature of men and of superstitious will-worship, it maketh them drunk and they sweetly drink it as a cup of wine. 5. The effect of it, for as sweet as it is, it is *wrath*, 1. Because it deserveth and procureth wrath on her and all who drink with her. 2. To be given up to drink this, is an effect of wrath and a great plague of God, 2 *Thess. 2.* That *Rome* in its hierarchy and spiritual dominion under the Pope, is this

*Babylon*, will appear more, *Chap. 17. and Chap. 18.* where this same saying is repeated, but differently: here by way of prediction upon the foreseen begun ruine of it, there, to wit, *Chap. 18.* after its execution by pouring the fifth vial on the beast's seat, which is *Rome*.

The third Angel beginneth his preaching, *vers. 9.* and it is prosecuted, *vers. 10, 11.* It is a conditional threatening of all Antichrists followers, if they shall continue to worship him after the former two Angels have preached. There is a notable gradation in their preaching, not as if the first ceased to preach, when the second beginneth, or so forth, (for, all of them preach together) but that, first, God maketh His Gospel shine, and revealeth Truth both to great and small, learned and unlearned; that is begun by the first Angel. 2. When that getteth little hearing, but great opposition, especially from the great ones of the Popes Kingdom who are enraged at it, then the Lord maketh light, both in the clearnesse and force of it, to proceed further to discover *Rome* to be *Babylon*, and to set His Ministers more directly against that state, to batter it down and begin its ruine, and from His Word clearly to foretell the compleat destruction of it, and that their grandour and those grandees in their pomp shall come down. 3. Because a superstitious respect to that Sea was deeply rooted in the hearts of the plurality of people, the third Angel is sent out not only to warn all her followers by that prediction, but to withdraw them from that erroneous way under all highest pains, certifying them that Popery will bring Gods everlasting curse on them, and that it standeth them on no lesse than the necessity of Salvation to quite it: by which Angel, separation from Him is pressed, as it is, *Chap. 18.* come out of her, when the same threatening is mentioned; so every one of these Preachers and preachings inferreth the other well, and agreeth to the Lords way of making His Truth to break up in the event.

1. *Luther* began to preach against some errors, as humane traditions, and to open the Doctrine of Justification by Faith alone, in opposition to Indulgences, Purgatory, &c. at first, without thinking that *Rome* was *Babylon*, or that there was a necessity of separating from it, but the Gospel could not long be in the world but that must be clear like the light. Then, 2. he grew in light and boldnesse, and others joyned with him, as *Melancthon*, *Justus*, *Jonas*, &c. and they came directly to speak of *Rome* as of *Babylon*, and of the Pope as of Antichrist, and thereupon applied these and such like plain passages, foretelling their ruine as of the speciall treacherous enemies of Jesus Christ, who had so long deluded the world and abused the Church.

Followeth upon that, the third Angels preaching, who cometh in with the necessity of abstaining from His worship and fellowship under pain of damnation; and the more the Pope fumed and persecuted, the more they preached and cleared that strange Truth in the world, that Popery was of it self damnable, and that though God had a Church latent amongst them in the time of darknesse, yet now he would not have it so, and this Doctrine was much urged against the *Pseudoniconedites*, to have the sinfulness of the Popish way born in upon souls, not only that he was not good or so good as the other, but that it was deadly and of a slaying and mortiferous power, and therefore the Godly could not communicate with them in it without sin. This was the Reformers third work. See *Sleid. lib. 1. & 2. Calvin. opuscul.* especially, *class. 3. per totam.* *Luther* his work ascendeth by these steps, 1. In his *Theses*, given out, Anno 1517. against Indulgences, and thereafter in their defence against *Sylvester*, *Eccius*, *Perarius* and others, he sheweth these things profite not to life, but Repentance and Faith resting only on Christs merits and the mercy of God alone, seing no Saints merits are perfect. Anno 1519. *Carlostadius* beginneth a dispute against the Pope. at *Lyppick*, whither *Eccius* came and provoked *Luther* to dispute,

by maintrining the Popes absolute supremacy; which *Luther* impugned: *Melancthon* also was with *Luther* at this dispute (but after, in an Epistle to *Leo 10.* he excused it some way) yet Anno 1520. he by a Book *de captivitate Babylonica*, publicly asserted and proved *Rome* to be *Babylon*, and the Pope Antichrist. *Sleid. lib. 2. pag. 23.* Thereafter, Anno 1521. (when *Zuinglius* had begun to preach boldly, the year before, at *Tigurine* in *Helvetia*) *Luther*, with the whole Colledge of *Wintzenberge*, burnt the Books of his adversaries (as they had done his before) appealing from the Pope to a Council, earnestly exhorting to abstain communion with the Church of *Rome*, which thereafter he hath both in his Sermons and Writings confirmed. This was more fully afterward joyntly prosecuted by *Melancthon*, *Calvine*, *Martyr*, and *Bucer*. See *Calv. contra Pseudoniconeditas*.

So we take the scope of this Chapter generally to set forth, 1. Antichrists fall, and the certainty of it. 2. The means by which it should be effectuated, to wit, preaching and action; by preaching withdrawing many from him, by judgement overthrowing the rest: which judgements are more particularly described by the vials. 3. By what degrees or in what order it should be carried on by these means, 1. Preachings and threatenings go before judgements: And, 2. in preaching the Truth of the Gospel is first preached, and then judgements more peremptorily denounced, *ut supra*, 1. against the head, then against the followers.

Now to come more particularly to this third Angel: he cometh shortly on the back of the former with a loud voice, which intimateth much deadnesse amongst the people that would not awake. 2. Much zeal, boldnesse and freenesse in him that preached, making out this Truth plainly that he was commissioned with. It is in general a commination, yet set down conditionally, that it may be a warning to make men flee that sin, that they may escape that judgement: and because the Key of Doctrine in threatenings and promises, is not absolutely to be applied by Ministers, (the conditions whereupon it goeth being indiscernable to them) and so it differeth from the use-making of the Key of Discipline, whereby absolutely we admit to or reject from Ordinances, because the rule of it is conversant about external scandals and profession, which are discernable. In short, as if he would say, follow not Popery longer: for if ye so do, ye shall not escape the heavy judgement of Gods everlasting wrath, and it will be the greater that ye have gotten warning.

In particular, it containeth a description of a Papist, or one of Antichrists followers, which is the object of this threatening, *vers. 9. 2.* It describeth their judgement, *vers. 10, 11.*

The description hath two parts, 1. They are described by worshipping Antichrist, which pointeth at some inward impression. 2. By reserving his mark, which supponeth some outward expression of their respect to him. 1. He saith; If any worship the beast and his Image; because none shall be missed, if it were but one that continueth. By *beast* and *Image*, we are not to understand two distinct things, as we shew, *Chap. 13.* for, here they have the same common worship; and their worshippers are of equal extent, and their judgement is the same; and (*vers. 11.*) when it is repeated, they are both spoken of as one, his mark and his name, and not theirs; but by *beast* is more especially holden forth the Pope, as the head of that Antichristian estate, and, as it were, the Author; and by *Image* is holden forth the complex body of the hierarchy, doctrine and superstitions which he hath framed, called *his*, because he composed it and made it; called *an Image*, because of its likenesse to the old *Roman* heathenish worship and tyranny over the Church. The worshipping of these implieth (as was said, *Chap. 13.* more than a civil devotednesse to that Pope as head, especially in his doctrine and worship.



The second part of the description, of *receiving his mark in the forehead and hand*, was expounded, Chap. 12. and implyeth not only mens acknowledging the Pope, but their yeelding and submitting to him, and giving up themselves as Souldiers o: Servants to that antichristian state, adhering to that profession, and by publick evidences owning it without, as well as cleaving to it in affection within. It is called here *the mark of his name*, which was before called the *number*, to shew that the *number* is something making his followers discernable as well as the mark.

The judgement threatened followeth, *vers. 10.* and *11.* which is to be looked on not only as he threatened them with hell; (for, that was common to such at all times) but from the aggravations of it, it is clear he threateneth them with more than an ordinary torment in hell; yea, more than these that lived in darknesse before this light shined unto them. The judgement is generally set out in two similitudes, then aggravated by some circumstances. The same shall, &c. that is, every one or any one that sinneth, follower & naster. The first similitude, is, *He shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, poured out in the cup of his indignation, &c.* This similitude, is opposed to their sin, *vers. 8.* Antichrist hath a sinful cup, and they will drink it, God hath a cup of wrath or wine of wrath, not for refreshing, but that it maketh mad, drunken and loathsome, *Psal. 75. 8. Isa. 51. ult. Jer. 25. 15. 27.* And this wine of His wrath is poured out, to shew the abundance of it: not in the cup of mercy; no, but of His indignation; and when the wine is wrath, and the cup indignation, O what a drink will that be, especially the wrath of an omnipotent just God! *Psal. 76. 7. Psal. 90. 11.* every word setteth out its terribleness.

The second similitude, is, *They shall be tormented with fire and brimstone*: whether there be material fire in hell or not, we need not dispute, it is here to expresse the exquisitest and greatest torment that can be imagined from what is used amongst men, possibly alluding to the destruction of Sodom, which God destroyed by fire. Certainly that torment must hold out a great torment, yet there are four aggravations added, 1. This wrath is *unmixed*, *vers. 10.* pure wrath, O how terrible! when little sparks of wrath here mixed with many mercies are so sore, what will it be when there will not be a drop of cold water gotten to quench burning wrath? *Luk. 16.*

The second aggravation, is, *vers. 10.* in the end, that is, *before the Lamb and His Angels*: which implyeth, 1. They shall be tormented before Christ (as if he took delight in it) whom now they despise, He will be master then, and shall see them and not help them, but their torment shall be, as it were, a satisfaction to him and a trophée of His victory. See *Luk. 19. 27.* The Mediators vengeance is sore, *Isa. 61. 2.* 2. That there will be in them by this, a sense both of their losse and of the sin that hath procured it, to be a gnawing worm within them; they shall not get leave to forget any of these, this presence *before* Him being more in respect of their conscience and sense than of nearnesse of place, which is not understood here.

The third aggravation is from the eternity of their torment,

it hath no end, but that fire burneth alway: for, their eternall torment is but *satisfactio* to them, and never *satisfactio* to God for the *smoke thereof ascendeth for ever and ever*, *vers. 11.* It was *Spira's* word, he would care little for hell, if it were for no longer than 20000. years, but when 20000. times 20000. years are expired, it is but beginning.

4. It is aggregated from its want of intermissions: pains here are sometimes lesse and more; but there there *is no rest night nor day*; it is there alway at the height of torment as the effect of Gods wrath; In which ye have a lively description of hell. It must needs be a fearfull thing to fall in the hands of the living God.

If any ask, how that rigide executing of justice upon the damned in hell may stand with the mercies of God, which are said to be over all His works, in a general sense at least? *Ans.* That may be said, notwithstanding of this, in these two respects, 1. Because that wrath which is inflicted upon the damned, is not adequate to the Power of God: for, He is able to punish them yet more terribly, even when their torment is at the highest. 2. Because even then they deserve more, and yet it would be no imputation to Justice if they were more intensely plagued; for although their sins, as they are acts in them, be finite; yet being considered with respect to the object God, against whom they are committed, they are infinite ills, and therefore deserve infinite punishments, and so in severity of Justice might be reached beyond what they are: this expression, in its scope, here doth hold forth hell to be insufferable to all, but that there is a further and greater measure of wrath to be poured out upon these who are guilty of the sin of Popery continued-in after the bringing of the Gospel to light. Whence we may *Observe*, 1. What a horrible and dreadful thing hell, and lying under the wrath of God for ever therein, is, that is so described here. It must be a fearfull thing to be for ever there. Many will curse their own unbelief of this when the cup of the indignation of God, filled with His wrath, shall be put in their hands to drink thereof for ever. 2. This sin of Popery and worshipping of the beast must be most abominable, which hath this wrath threatened against it: it must be a desperat Religion that hath this condition for the expectation thereof. Let none think it a light sin, which the Lord so peremptorily threateneth: It is no little mercy that we are freed therefrom, and there is need to be thankful for the light we have, and to improve it well while we have it. 3. Abused light hasteneth, and heightneth wrath: hell now becometh both more sore, and more inevitable than before this light did break forth. The despising of the Gospel will make hell exceeding insufferable, even beyond that of the despising of the Law, as *Heb. 10. 28. &c.* 4. Mark the connexion of these two cups, there is a cup, of sin which she maketh others to drink of (it is called *the wine of the wrath of her fornication*, because in Gods justice men were plagued by being given up to that error) whereupon followeth, *vers. 10.* a cup of the wrath of God, and that without mixture; Sin may be sweet for a time but it draweth on bitterness without mixture; the cup that followeth it, will better shew the nature thereof.

### Concerning the difficulty of Salvation under Popery.

There is one thing asserted here, as also in the preceeding Chapter, which possibly may need clearing to some not acquainted with the nature and mysteries of Popery: and that is, that the Salvation of Papists, according to their principles, seemeth hereby to be made impossible; it may be therefore worthy the enquiring into, whether, or upon what grounds that may be made out? and if that be understood of and extended unto all within that Church? or, whether, and how difference

may be made amongst these that bear that name? What may be said of some, and how differently we ought to construct of many, we shall afterward touch; but now for the main, our direct assertion is this, That a Papist, as such, living and dying according to the complex principles of the doctrine and worship that is followed in Popery, cannot be saved, nor expect justification before God, I say, a Papist living and dying according to the essential principles of Popery, which do especially relate

late to these three. 1. To their giving to the Pope such ample authority, reverence, and adoration, as they use to do. 2. To their way of carrying on the Justification and Salvation of a sinner before God, as it is holden forth in their doctrine. 3. To their manner of worship, that is, praying to Saints, worshipping of Images, sacrifice of the Masse, and other such things—owned both by the doctrine, laws and practice of that Church. We say, one living and dying devoted to these, although neither scandalous in outward practices, nor defective in respect of external painfulness; yet upon this account, as being a Papist, chargeable with the three general heads foresaid, he cannot but be lyable to Gods judgement, and die without any solid hope of being saved by these principles. The general, we conceive, is clear from what was said, Chap. 13. vers. 8. this kind of worshipping the beast being held out as inconsistent with election, which saith that no Elect person can so live and die, and therefore none such can be saved: here again, worshipping of the beast, and drinking of the cup of Gods Indignation for ever, are peremptorily put together. And all alongst this Book, the beast with his followers, and great *Babylon*, are ever looked upon as most hateful to God, till at last (Chap. 19. and 20.) he and they are cast into the lake together: and that is mentioned to be upon this very account of their being stated by their doctrine, worship, and practices in opposition to Christ, without respect to moral ills, common to them with others of the world. This is also confirmed from 2 *Theff.* 2. 10, and 12. where this deceivableness of Antichrists apostasie is bounded to them that perish, and this is marked as the design of Gods justice therein, that all they *may be damned* which receive not the love of the Truth: This then must be of it self the very high way to damnation. And we cannot question the truth of this, without the overturning of the direct scope and meaning of these Scriptures, and the application of them, which is laid down all alongs in this Book.

If it be yet required, that further satisfaction be given as to the grounds which render their salvation impossible. We do answer, that it ariseth from these two, which do infallibly demonstrate the same. 1. This way of Popery, is of it self exceeding sinful, and abominable before the Lord, and so doth in more than an ordinary manner make a person lyable to His wrath. 2. As it is of it self sinful; so it hath no solid way laid down for removing of sin, but doth leave a man without any solid hope of relief from his original and actual sins, beside that it incapacitateth him to look upon it self as sinful; or, to seek for the right remedie thereof. And where these two are put together, to wit, hainous sin, and no way to remove it, or any other, what can be expected but inevitable ruine and condemnation? For where the disease is deadly, and the cure naught, death must be certain. We shall therefore a little make out both these assertions, from which the conclusion laid cannot but follow.

1. We say, that the way of Popery in it self, and its complex nature, is most hainously sinful, and doth render the followers thereof exceedingly guilty before God. Therefore we will find it charged with the most abominable guiltinesses, that are elsewhere mentioned in Scripture. 1. There is in it the guilt of *Idolatry*, and that of all sorts, 1. A worshipping of Angels (whereof somewhat is spoken, Chap. 19.) the worshipping of Saints departed, and a giving of divine honour to them, a worshipping of the Pope (spoken of Chap. 13. and 17.) by ascribing to him divine attributes, which he willingly receiveth, (as *Tbuan lib.* 3. pag. 95. among others, doth observe) a worshipping of the Crosse, or *συνολατρεία* worshipping of the Sacraments, or *εργολατρεία*, worshipping of Saints and their reliques, making Images of the holy Trinity and persons of the Godhead, and many other kinds of *Idolatry* commit they, and

that both against the first and second command; and therefore are said Chap. 9. vers. 20. ) to worship the works of their hands, and devils, and idols of gold and silver, &c. of which somewhat was spoken in that place.

The second sin charged upon them, is, *blasphemie*, a sin of the highest nature, that is, either by detracting from the sovereign and absolute God that which is due to Him, or attributing to Him what becometh not His Holiness, Mercy and Sovereignty; or, by ascribing what is proper to Him to some creature: in all which respects, Popery is a doctrine of blasphemy, as was hinted, Chap. 13. and therefore this beast is said to be full of names of blasphemy, Chap. 17. 3.

3. *Defection and Apostasie* from the received Truth, is a hainous sin; and this is most essentially proper to Popery, Therefore is it (2 *Theff.* 2.) denominate by this, to be a *falling away*. when we call Popery an Apostasie, it is to be understood as differing from any particular heresie, although these also be of themselves damnable: for, there is a defection by a concurrence of many heresies, corrupting the series of the truths of the Gospel; and therefore cannot be but exceeding finfull and damnable, seeing God hath so peremptorily threatened adding unto, or taking from the Word, as it is *Rev.* 22.

4. It is in sum *Antichristianity*, or, the sin of Antichristianism, to be found chargeable in the manner foresaid: and can there be any sin desperately dangerous, if that be not? Which though it do not expressly thwart with Christs Natures and Persons (which is not to be Antichrists error, as was observed, Chap. 12. toward the close) yet doth it exautorat Him, detract from His Offices, and the effects thereof, and constantly, as such, doth top with His Church and People, and lay down a way of salvation and life upon these same terms that it stood on in the Covenant of Works; and therefore in that respect, it may well be said to deny that Christ came in the flesh, which is the very spirit of Antichrist, which doth necessarily follow from that doctrine. For, say they, 1. obedience to the commands and the merit of works, is the only way to life. 2. say they, That supposing the habits of Grace to be infused, and men to perform these works in the strength thereof, they could not but be acceptable to God, and enter the man into life, as being meritorious thereof, although Christ had never come in the flesh. And 3. they say, That His becoming man, or His suffering so much upon supposition of the former, was not necessary for the procuring of this Grace; yea, they deny *de facto*, that Christ did suffer any thing of the curse inwardly in His soul on the behalf of sinners. Now, all these being put together, do they not amount to this in effect, that Christs coming in the flesh is in vain or not true? But this corrupt contrivance of their doctrine, will be more clear in the following Assertion. To conclude this then, we only say, if *Idolatry*, *Blasphemie*, *Antichristianism*, and *Apostasie* in the highest nature, be sinful and hateful in the sight of God, Popery must be so: neither is it for nought that Scripture doth so paint out that sin by such hainous characters, but that He may imprint the detestableness thereof upon hearts; beside the accessory guilt of murders, thefts, persecutions, and other sins which are incident to that way, especially to the leaders thereof, as was hinted, Chap. 9. 20. But now we proceed to the second thing laid down; to shew that according to the Popish principles, a sinner can never win to peace with God, and so cannot but perish: we shall first shew what is their doctrine concerning that, or, what is the way that they lay down for the justifying of a sinner. 2. We shall shew the inconsistency thereof with the way laid down in the Gospel, from which the damnable absurdity of that doctrine, and truth of the former Assertion, will evidently appear.

1. It is to be adverted, that though they use the title *Justification*, that yet indeed they do deny it, and, upon the matter, acknowledge *Sanctification* only: and so in this rather



not to enquire, If there be such a thing as Justification, distinct from Satisfaction, than how Justification is perfected, their Justification being only an infusing of Grace, whereby he that was a sinner becometh, by a physical change, holy.

2. It is to be adverted, that they maintain a twofold Justification, one (as they say) of the wicked, this they call the first Justification, when the first grace is given to one, who formerly was not gracious; the other is the Justification of one already habitually gracious, this they call the second, and is by augmentation and encrease of the Grace given. The first Justification they acknowledge is free, being only procured by the merit of Christ; and that there can be no condign merit of that, although by the right use of free-will, and the exercise of moral good works, if it may be congruously (or, *de congruo*) merited; so that one who doth what in him lyeth by the help of common Grace (which is named by them *gratia auxilians*, and in some sufficiency, at least remotely, is given to all) they cannot but obtain it. This first Justification they grant to be sufficient to children, who cannot merit, or one that receiveth the Sacrament of Baptism, or penance, and doth not outlive the same, but die *in instanti*, if that case can fall out) yet this they think impossible, because at least, they have contrition and holiness in their vow, and want not some desires of further, or, at least continuance in what they have received, and in that respect do merit, as *Suarez* speaketh, *de gratia* pag. 223. lib. 8. cap. 12.

The other Justification that is acquired by the performing of good Works, and the merit that proceedeth from them, they maintain to be simply necessary to all that are at age, because, as that forecited Author saith, lib. 12. cap. 28. pag. 222. and 223. *ipsa gloria secundum totum suum esse, & (ut ita dicam) secundum substantiam suam, tanquam merces meritorum promittitur*; and glory in Gods way is laid down to be the reward of merit. And this supponeth a free working to preceed it: this merit they maintain to be *de condigno*, or of condignity, and that not from any imputation of Christs merit to these works, but from the nature and proportionateness of these works to the reward itself. Hence it is, that some of them (to wit, *Vasquez in 1. 2. disp. 214. num. 43.*) do deny that there is any respect or look had to Christs merit at all: and others who grant there is respect had to it, (so as to make them merit in a more excellent way) yet say, that that proceedeth not from any defect that is in them, as if Christs merit were to supply that; for, *Adam* before his fall, and the Angels had true merit without Christ, much less secondly, as if they did not merit of themselves properly, except by the vertue of Christs merit: for then, say they, that were not to ascribe the merit to our works, but to Christs; and that our works were only meritorious from that extrinsick ground, and so God would not reward our works but Christs, which would resolve in this, that we would not merit Grace and glory, but would get it by gift, which to them is absurd, as is asserted by *Suarez*, lib. 12. cap. 18. and 19. pag. 484, 486, &c. at large: which is the joynt opinion of *Bellarmino*, and others of them, *Bellarmino de justificatione*, lib. 9. cap. 10. 938. and of the Council of Trent, *Seff. 6. cap. 10*; and 11. See also, lib. 3. *de justificatione* cap. 16. 109. yea, they say that this merit doth not proceed from respect to Gods promise only, as if it did arise from that alone, without respect had to the intrinsick value of these acts, because, say they, Gods rewarding of good works, is an act of proper justice, and cannot but be done, and doth only look to Gods Covenant and Law, wherein he hath appointed to accept these Works as of themselves meritorious of Glory, without respect to that extrinsick consideration: therefore they disclaim the opinion of *Scotus*, *Durand* and the *Nominals*, that found the merit of Works upon Gods promise allannerly, as if they were not meritorious without that, because that

opinion will rather infer it to be a free gift, which one may engage himself to give for a thing of little value, and would not be proper justice, nor differ from that they call *meritum de congruo*, which often is founded upon a promise. This condignity therefore is grounded upon these two, 1. An intrinsic value in the works themselves, that proceed from the gracious habit wherewith the worker is qualified. 2. An appointment or condition of Gods, whereby he hath promised such a reward, to wit, glory to such works, as *Suarez* hath it at large, lib. 12. 480. 483, &c. And *Bellarmino* layeth down that, *Mat. 19. If thou wilt enter into life keep the commands*, as the very form of the Covenant, and as the only way to life, *de justificatione*, lib. 3. cap. 13. In which respect, sometimes they say Justification is free, that is, in the first respect; sometimes by Works, that is, in the second respect.

3. We would advert, that as they distinguish between the culpa, or blot of sin, and the reatus, or guilt and punishment of sin; so do they affirm, that the first may be removed by Justification, when the other, to wit, the punishment, is to be satisfied for, at least in part by satisfaction to Justice, where the sins have been committed by the free-will of the person, to wit, if he were a dult, or at age (for they acknowledge this not to be necessary for infants, and original sin) See *Suarez*, lib. 7. pag. 128. *Et pena aliqua (as he saith) non remittitur gratis, sed per condignam satisfactionem*. And therefore, *gratis remittitur culpa, licet postea sit de justitia satisfaciendum pro pena*.

To lay down then their way, these things are supposed without controversie, 1. That man naturally is obnoxious to Gods curse, and cannot save himself from it. 2. That before he can be admitted to happiness, he must be justified. 3. That God is the efficient cause of this, and the principal worker, is also without controversie. 4. That both infusion of grace and remission of sin, do accompany Justification, is denied by none. 5. That the ultimate or final end is the glory of God, and the salvation of the person justified is the subordinate, is agreed unto by all. 6. That Christs righteousness is the only meritorious cause, is, in word, professed. 7. They acknowledge the necessity of faith to concur in it, as we do of good Works to follow after: hitherto there seemeth to be no great absurdity, we had need therefore to consider it the more narrowly in respect of three other causes added by them, to wit, the formal, material and instrumental causes, with the effects and consequences following thereon.

And we put the question thus, *Wherewith may a sinner hazard to appear before Gods justice, so as to expect Gods acceptance of him?* This will draw the question nearer, when a sinner is to choose what defence to take him to; or whereupon to ground his plea before the throne of God.

1. They answer roundly, that man is justified *per solam gratiam inherentem, tanquam per formam integram sine imputatione externae justitiae Christi*, that is, by inherent Grace alone, as the intire form of righteousness without any imputation of Christs Righteousness; and that this inherent righteousness doth confer this of itself, as *Suarez* layeth it down, lib. 7. cap. 7. pag. 83. in two corollaries expressly; although they differ amongst themselves, some making it habitual Grace only, as *Bellarmino*; some both habitual and actual, as *Suarez*; yet all agree, that it is inherent Grace which constituteth us just before Gods Throne, therefore do they call it *gratia gratum faciens*.

2. This inherent Grace, they acknowledge to be infused by God without any condign merit, and to imply these two,

1. Some-what positive, to wit, the bringing in a new quality, or Grace in the soul, which is, as it were, a new form to it. 2. Some-what privative, that is, a purging, or cleansing of the soul from the blot of sin, which necessarily followeth upon



upon the former, as two contrary forms are inconsistent together. Thus they say, this Grace expelleth, or excludeth sin from the soul, as light doth darkness, or heat coldness in water when it is caldified. This to them, in effect, is the remission of the faults which they account necessary to Justification, and so Gods justifying of a sinner, is His infusing that first Grace into the soul, whereby necessarily sin is really and actually removed (and not in opinion only, as they object, to our not imputing thereof) *Aquin. 1. 2. quæst. 113.* doth include four things in Justification, to wit, an act of free-will tending to God, and another in reference to sin, beside the former two.

3. They acknowledge Christs Righteousnesse to be the only meritorious cause of this first justification, because that cannot be merited either by Faith, Works or any thing that preceedeth, *pag. 127.* that is, He procured the Infusion of this Grace.

4. The material cause of this Righteousnesse or Justification, they hold to be the soul of man, which by the acts of its free-will in Faith, Fear, Contrition, Love, Prayer, and other dispositions, must necessarily concur for disposing to the receiving of this Grace, and that as a cause without which it is not attained; for, saith the forecited Author, *lib. 12. pag. 304. cap.*

24. Faith, Contrition, and such dispositions are laid down, in Gods appointment to be the condition of His infusing this Grace, and so man obtaineth this Justification, when of his free-will and otherways, he is congruously disposed to receive the same, and, saith he, *pag. 324.* God infuseth Grace with respect to mans contrition, & *ideo infundit quia contritus*, otherways not. Although these dispositions be not *de condigno* meritorious of it, yet they are matter whereby, or out of which it is brought forth, as a pre-existing material cause; and in this, mans soul is not the subject capable only, (which we say) but the material cause.

5. For the way how, or instrumental cause by which this is applied, (because this is no lesse necessary than other causes, for it cannot profit if it be not applied) they maintain that to be done by the Sacraments of the Church, (although some name the Word and Ministers also) these, according to their grounds, confer this Grace *ex opere operato*, or by the applying of them to persons so disposed, especially Baptism and Penance (that is, the Priests absolution after confession, which to them is a Sacrament) this they say *ex Dei ordinatione, attrito confert gratiam*, *pag. 368.* and if there be not occasion of the Sacrament, they may have it in their vow, and so be accepted without it, *pag. 223.* Baptism, they say, conferreth it *in iusto, penitentiis, Eucharistia iusto*. Therefore are these two Sacraments simply necessary to them, the first for original sin, the second for actual.

6. When one is thus justified by this first Justification, although the blot of sin be removed, and the person be just and holy, there remaineth yet satisfaction to be made for the removing of the punishment, at least in part, and that, as some affirm, satisfaction condign, as *Vasquez 3. part. disp. 1. cap. 11.* for which end they prescribe their Pilgrimages, Penances, Fasting, Vowes, Almes, Dotations; and even Purgatory itself, and Soul-masses come in here for removing of the punishment and making the satisfaction to God for their guilt. And because where there are many sins, it will draw to thousands of years in Purgatory, for they prescribe sometimes, 3. 7. 10. or 20. years for one sin, and they may be multiplied in one day, and so draw to a great length; therefore it is to them, as *Prillamin* calleth it, a great difficulty what cometh of such whose satisfaction is not complete, as at the day of Judgement, seeing it may draw 20000. years. He answereth it either by the Popes indulging of it, or by the greater intensitie of suffering whereby to 300. or 400. years that may be contracted; *De indulg. lib. 1. cap. 9. col. 1174.*

7. Because heaven cannot be obtained, according to their principles, but by merit, and that by their own proper merit, therefore even these who are justified by this first Grace, must go about the works of holiness, as the account upon which they must attain heaven, even as Adam was to have done for life, if he had sinned in his innocency; and in this respect, they say that Christ merited to procure Gods promise to give life to our merits, and to accept of them, not as if His merit concurred therein to make them meritorious, but as an universal cause influencing them that they may merit in a more excellent way, as *Suarez* speaketh, *pag. 488.* Therefore he distinguisheth young ones from others, because they are saved by Christ only, but saith, that no promise doth hold forth the reward to any for Christs merit, but for their own, *pag. 491.* In which respect, to them Christ hath merited a new Covenant of Works, and strength of new to keep the same; and they are to stand and fall in the obtaining of life promised, according to their own performing of the condition of Works in the use of that first Grace, and all that a man hath to ground his expectation of obtaining heaven upon, is his conformity to this supposed bargain, for which that place (*Mat. 19.*) is made use of, *If thou wilt enter into life.*

In the last place, because man can never be accounted perfectly righteous, much less to merit any thing so long as he hath sin dwelling in him, and his actions be defiled with the same, Therefore lest their contrivance be marred with this, they do account indwelling concupiscence not to be sin against the moral Law, and many sins to be venial and not mortal, which therefore do not hinder a persons merit or acceptation; nay, not their perfection and fulfilling of the Law, which they suppose to be possible.

These are the grounds they lay for the thoroughing of their Justification, and from these they draw several conclusions, that seem contrary, as that men may merit encrease and perseverance in Grace, and that *ex condigno*, that they may come to a perfection of righteousness in respect of their inherent holiness and fulfilling of the Law of God; that one may supererogate, and so that there must be a store-house of satisfactions; for, though they say one cannot merit for another, yet there being a consideration of merit, and satisfaction both in all their good Works, they may satisfie for another, when they do or suffer more than might explate their own guilt, which would therefore be useless if it were not to be extended to other Saints, as *Bellar.* seareth not to speak, *lib. 1. indulgentiis, cap. 4. col. 1160.* Upon this they found their Indulgences and treasure of Saints merits, which the Pope by the fulness of his power doth apply to be imputed to these who want of their own, (yet this way of imputation is alway rejected by them in reference to our being justified by the merits of Christ) They assert also (as they may well do) that this Justification is uncertain to any, so that none can conclude, whether he be really so, or not: yea, they say, that it may be lost and one justified so now, may through the want of good works or his sinfulness perish, or, if he be again recovered, it must be by absolution and the sacrament of Penance, wherein the first Justification is to be renewed, and Grace again to be conferred. So that although he get the first Justification by Christs merits only, yet may that be fallen from, as Adam fell from his Covenant-state, if that habitual Grace be not improved in the practice of holy duties.

This is a short view of their contrivance of the way of Justification, which we have laid down out of themselves, and have cited *Suarez* most frequently, because he pretendeth to a midway in these questions, wherein many of their Schoolmen dorun into extreams; and they want not great confusion, differences, and contradictions among themselves in many of these tenets: so that it is no marvel to find different expressions of their judgement in these things.



Let us now enquire, if according to the former grounds, a sinner, that is pursued by the Law, may with confidence expect to be justified and absolved before the Tribunal of Gods justice; and we confidently assert, that according to these grounds no flesh living can be justified, which this one argument may make out. No sinner can expect Justification or pardon of sin, but according to the grounds and terms laid down in the Gospel; But this way is not such. *Ergo, &c.* Or, That contrivance of Justification which doth overturn almost fully, most, if not all the Truths of the Gospel, and is utterly inconsistent with the same, cannot be the way how a sinner may be justified; But this is such, &c. For making out of this, we shall, first, propose some general considerations. 2. More particularly touch some inconsistencies of the same. 3. Remove some objections. And, 4. resume the conclusion.

The first general we propose to be considered, is this, that the way which God hath laid down in the Gospel for attaining of life by Christ Jesus, doth formally differ from that way of attaining life that He propounded to Adam: hence these two Covenants of Works and Grace and their conditions are frequently and directly opposed in the Scripture as being different and opposit in respect of the account upon which men were to expect life; (See *Rom. 10. 6, 7, &c. Gal. 3.*) But this way laid down, is in matter and form the same with the Covenant of Works in this respect, because it foundeth a mans hope of expecting life and heaven upon the merit of his own works and his observing of the commands, which these three grounds do confirm. 1. That they do compare his working and merit by it, to Adams before he fell, and supposeth this to succeed now in the room of that, as in the forecited Author, *lib. 12. cap. 19. pag. 487*, is clear. 2. That they state the terms of life in these words, *If thou would enter life, keep the commands, and call the labourers to receive their hire, Matth. 20.* And so from this they say, Christs merits have procured the Lords re-entring of a Covenant with us, wherein He promiseth happiness to our working as the condition thereof, *ibid. pag. 488.* and saith there is no promise of the acceptance of a sinner but upon this account. And, 3. that they say, the way now to life hath the same threatenings and promises that the first had, and so they conclude, it is the same with it. And although they acknowledge Christ to have merited this promise to be made, and this Grace to be given us whereby we may keep it, yet doth that infer no alteration of the way or terms held out in that promise in respect of the condition thereof, although it shew a different ground upon which it is built, and from which it floweth: If therefore the Covenants differ, and a sinner cannot now obtain life upon that same condition, and upon the same way that Adam did, (even though he be habitually renewed) Then can he not come to obtain life in this way laid down. But to say the former, were to continue the Covenant of Works, and exclude the Covenant of Grace: This way therefore to life is utterly impossible.

2. If by the strain of the Gospel Christ Jesus be made all to us in respect of our peace and happiness, and that immediately (that is, without the interveining of any new merit occasioned by His merit) Then the former way cannot be consistent with the Gospel, because immediately infused Grace is made our formal Righteousness or first Justification; and our actual good works, our merit or second Justification: and these two are inconsistent together; for, Christ cannot immediately be our Righteousness, (as we stand before God) and inherent Grace and good Works also be immediately the same: because according to the first, if it be asked at the sinner, What is thy righteousness by which immediately thou darest appear before God or expect absolution and heaven from him? He is to answer, Christ and His satisfaction offered to me in the Gospel, and by Faith received; this is the defence I mind

to shelter my self with at the bar of His justice, and by which I expect to be saved. According to the last he were to answer that former question, thus, Inherent Grace is that which maketh me acceptable to God, and my good works, and their con-dign merit is that upon which I expect heaven according to His promise made thereto. Which certainly would relish most uncomfortably to a challenged sinner, and is contrary to the former. But the former is true, that by the Gospel Christ Jesus is immediately made our Righteousness, by whose merits we may have only confidence to appear before God, to expect remission and salvation from Him according to that Scripture, *1 Corinth. 1. 30. He is made to us of God wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, Col. 3. 11.* Christ is all; which is expressly mentioned in opposition to circumcision and uncircumcision, and every thing else, which are not admitted to be any thing to the Believer in the former respects, but Christ alone, *Phil. 3. 8, 9.*

3. Gods contrivance of the Gospel for the justifying of a sinner through Christ Jesus, is clearly holden out to be by a judicial transferring of our sins as a debt upon Christ the Cautioner, and of His Righteousness and merit to us, to be imputed for our Justification before God, without any respect had to our inherent holiness or good works, whether done before or after Justification, as may appear from these two places, *2 Corinth. 5. 20.* that Christ is said to be made sin for us, that we may be made the Righteousness of God through Him: where this is clear, that by the Covenant of Redemption we are to be righteous by Christ, as Christ was sin for us; but Christ was made sin or sentenced by Justice for it, not by any infusion of sinful habits (which were blasphemous to think) but by having imputed to Him the guilt of our sin in respect of the punishment thereof: It will follow therefore that He is our Righteousness, or we are justified or made just by Him, by having His Righteousness imputed to us, and accepted as performend in our name without laying the weight upon any inherent qualification in us; and can there be a more clear way to expound what this is to be made just by Christ, than by its opposit, what it is to be made sin for us? The second place, is, *Philip. 3. 8, 9.* where Paul is seeking to be in readiness for appearing before Gods Tribunal, and he was one who wanted not inherent Grace or actual good Works, and in a great measure, yet in reference to Gods acceptance he can rest nowhere but in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which, is of the Law, but that Righteousness which is by Faith in Christ: where we have first Paul looking on a Righteousness within him, which was his own, and that at the highest pitch of it: (for, it respecteth any posterior time when he might be called to a reckoning) this righteousness he disclaimeth as not being that which would be accepted. 2. He looketh to a Righteousness without him in Christ Jesus, which he considereth as being the only shelter even of a Believer from the wrath of God; so that if the question be proposed to Paul, What wilt thou choose to lippen unto? Where wilt thou choose to be found in the day of Judgment? His answer would be, only in Christ. If it be asked, what this is? he answereth, it is to have His Righteousness in opposition to his own. If it be again asked, How he cometh by it? he sheweth by Faith in Christ he cometh to partake of His Righteousness, which he dare lippen more unto than to his own. Whereby it appeareth that the Gospels way of justifying a sinner, is by imputing of Christs Righteousness, and by a sinners resting upon it. For, this righteousness, is not that which is procured by Christ, and is inherently in the Believer, but is that which is in Christ, and whereof the Believer partaketh by hiding himself under it, and by his faith opposing it to Justice which can be done no other way than by imputation: Now, there being nothing more opposit to the imputation of Christs Righteousness than the former Doctrine, there can be nothing

more opposit to the way of the Gospel : and so if it be impossible to be justified without the imputation of Christs Righteousness, it is impossible to be justified by the way of the Papists.

4. The Scripture holdeth forth Gods way of reconciling sinners to Himself, to be by way of Covenanting, as, *Isa. 55. 2, 3.* wherein God offereth, and the hearer receiveth and closeth with His offer, upon which followeth Gods acceptance of the person, as, *Joh. 1. 12. Heb. 8. Jer. 31.* and his being reconciled to God. Hence there is so much spoken of Covenanting in Scripture, that the whole Doctrine thereof beareth that name of Covenant, or Testament, and one that closeth with it cannot but be justified. Now, by this Doctrine of Justification by inherent Grace, or merit of Works, there is no place left for such Covenanting upon such terms; yea, they are inconsistent together, Therefore this cannot be the way of making up the breach between God and a sinner.

5. That Justification which the Gospel speaketh of, is that wherein Faith hath a peculiar causality beyond any other Grace, as that which doth entitle a sinner unto Pardon and Justification by the vertue of Christs Righteousness, which it doth take hold of. Hence it is that so frequently in Scripture it is called *justification by faith*, and that, as opposit to all other Graces in that respect, *the righteousness which is of faith*, and such like. Now, the former way is utterly inconsistent with this, Therefore cannot be the way to Salvation. And considering, that Covenanting with God, Imputation of Christs Righteousness, Justification by Faith, &c. are things so essential unto the up-making of a sinners breach with God, and that yet all of them are so great strangers, even in the very name to the Popish way of justification, and materially inconsistent with the same, it cannot be of God.

More particularly, we will find it overturn, 1. the nature of Justification, and at best it doth put in Sanctification in the room thereof; and there is never any distinct ground laid, by which a sinner may come to receive a sentence of absolution before God, but this, to wit, Justification, is lost by the former Doctrine; and they acknowledge no such thing distinct from Regeneration or Sanctification, as if no such act as Justification were needful or mentioned in Scripture, as distinct from these; and, in effect, it leaveth a sinner to a way of Salvation that wanteth Justification in it: and therefore cannot profit him. For by denying that which is the formal cause of Justification, they deny it self, seeing that giveth it a being.

2. It derogateth from the nature of Grace, and that in several respects. 1. As to graces efficacy, that it hangeth at mans free-will. 2. As to its Sovereignty, that it boundeth it to mans disposing of himself. 3. As to its freedom, in that it appointeth mans own satisfaction for the removing of punishment, and his own merit for the obtaining of reward; and as to its spiritual sublime way of working, making it carnally to be conferred *ex opere operato*.

3. It enervateth the merit of Christ: For, at the best it attributeth to that only the restoring of a Covenant of Works, which may be entered, kept, and broken according to mens working; and, as it were, the procuring to men a new stock of habitual Grace, with which they are to trade, and procure their own happiness by their after merit. In reference to which if they fail, Christs merits, and their habitual Grace will not profit them, Therefore the weight of obtaining life is laid there. But the removing of the punishment, and the obtaining of the reward, they ascribe to humane satisfaction and good Works, and that by reason of their own intrinsic worth, without the imputation of Christs merit, except in respect of the general influence formerly alleged; yea, they fear not to call Saints their Redeemers, in so far as by their works of Superogation they suppose them to have satisfied in some thing for them; as

*Billay. asserteth, lib. 1. de indulg. cap. 4. col. 1161.* and at most they are sanctified by Christs merit, but after that they do for themselves.

4. It wrongeth the Lord Himself, 1. In His Grace, as hath been said. 2. In His Justice, as if He were to be satisfied by creatures satisfaction, and that in such things as many men would not be pleased with; yea, they scarce not to affirm, that such holiness could not but have satisfied Him and merited, although Christ had never suffered: which sheweth also how little they respect Christs merit, as the forscited *Swartz, pag. 484. and 486.* asserteth. 3. It wrongeth His sovereignty, in that it tyeth Him in proper Justice to be mans debtor, and that not by vertue of His promise only, but from the consideration of the intrinsic value and merit of mens good works, that He were not just, if He did not reward them.

5. It wrongeth Gods Covenant: for either it alloweth no Covenant at all, or quite altereth the nature and terms thereof, and turneth it to Works, as hath been said. For it doth still make the stipulation on mans part the same which doth constitute the form of the Covenant of Works, however one be enabled to perform that stipulation, which certainly was by grace, even to Adam.

6. It enervateth Faith, excluding altogether that Faith that receiveth Christ and taketh hold on Him, and closeth with the Covenant of Grace, and leaveth no more to a Believer, but anaked assent to the Truth of God, which is in the devils: and utterly secludeth Faith from any particularity of application in the making of our peace with God in any respect.

7. It overturneth the Truth concerning mans natural estate, in giving him a free-will in reference to spiritual good, and that before the infusion of Grace, and in making this acting of free-will a necessary disposition to Justification and a necessary condition of merit.

8. It corrupteth the holy Law of God, 1. In its end, as if now it were to be the condition of Gods Covenant upon which life is to be attained. 2. In its meaning, as if it did not condemn natural concupiscence; and many other things are exempted by them from it, that they may make the fulfilling thereof possible.

9. It denyeth the true nature of sin, and maketh many things that are contrary to the Law of God to be no sin; as by its excluding of the remainings of original sin, and many others (by that fond distinction of *venial* and *mortal sins*) from being accounted sins that make men lyable to eternal wrath.

10. It overturneth the nature of the Sacraments, 1. In making these to be Sacraments which are not, as Penance, Extream unction, &c. 2. In attributing other ends and another manner of attaining to these ends than agreeth with the Word, or can quiet a conscience in reference thereto, as the conferring of Grace *ex opere operato*.

11. It doth not leave Discipline undestroyed: for, it abuseth the power of the keyes in this absolution, to make up a Sacrament and confer grace, and give Indulgences, and such-like, which no sober man will think a sufficient way for founding of his peace, or to be a defence against a challenge in the day of Judgement.

12. It doth altogether overturn that consolation that God alloweth His people: For,

1. There is great anxiety in the supposed way of attaining it.

2. No certainty of having of it, and so it can yield comfort to none.

3. According to their principles, it may be lost, and one that



that is justified to day, may be in a state of damnation to morrow.

4. It maketh their recovery difficult and almost desperate : for, (as *Bellarmino* in the forecited place asserteth) it may have with it 20000. years continuance in purgatory. Of this uncomfortableness, and of all this matter, more may be seen on *Chap. 9. Left. 1.*

13. It excludeth knowledge, and cryeth up ignorance ; So that *Bellarmino lib. de Justific.* doth not fear to say, that Faith ought rather to be defined by ignorance than knowledge, *per ignorantiam potius quam per notitiam.*

14. It overturneth and corrupteth the nature of holiness and good works, and all spiritual worship, putting in, I cannot tell what, will-worship, external rites, &c. In the place of all practice, mumbling and muttering unknown words for prayer, afflicting of the body for mortification, and many such like things have they.

These are but a part of the horrible absurdities of this way, and yet we suppose are sufficient to demonstrate the truth of what we assert. to wit, that this way is involved with many fundamental inconsistencies with the Truth and way of the Gospel; and so cannot be a possible way of attaining Salvation ; for, it maketh men to count many sins not to be sins, and so never to repent of them : the sins that it discovereth, it leadeth them not to the right satisfaction, which only can be accepted for them, to wit, Christs Righteousness, but to their own inherent holiness and good works ; yea, even this they corrupt ; and what they account saving Grace, as Faith, Repentance, Humility and such like, are nothing less than such indeed before God.

If it be again further asked, what then are we to esteem of such as lived under Popery, if all of them be excluded from the obtaining of salvation ? We answer with a fourfold distinction, 1. We would distinguish these who might live under Popery, and yet be kept from the infection thereof and no way belong to that body, from the native members thereof ; of such we have spoken, *Chap. 11. and 12.* to such the Lord speaketh, *Chap. 18. Come out of Babylon, my people :* such were rather captives under her tyranny, than subjects of her Kingdom : of these there is no question, but as the Lord sealed them for Himself, *Chap. 7.* so did He always singularly own them, and accept of them. 2. We may distinguish Papists in these that are antichristian worshippers, and others who are superstitious, and in some things are erroneous : We call them antichristian, who receive the beasts mark and number, and give him worship in more than an humane manner, ascribing to him a certain divinity, Infallibility, universal supremacy, and such like antichristian attributes ; and who, 2. receive his doctrine in the complex contrivance thereof, which is his number ; and, 3. who joyn in his worship wherein it is antichristian, as praying to Saints, worshipping of Images, adoration of the Mass, and such like. These in the former assertion we have excluded. Again, we call them superstitious Papists, who might not altogether have kept a distance from that Church in every thing, but many ways have been tainted with their superstitions, yet so as to be kept from an antichristian conjunction with that society or union therewith in things that are plainly antichristian ; but might be testifying against such by some sincere zeal and pure light. Thus, 1. we suppose that many did give some reverence to the Popes, who yet did utterly abhor their gross usurpations and blasphemies, his assuming to himself what was proper to God and Jesus Christ, and detest the base flatteries of others, that ascribed these to him, as to be supreme head of all, and that both in Civil and Ecclesiastical things, to be infallible, to be countable to none, to authorize traditions, and such like ; and might only give him some reverence, either from humane policy and Ecclesiastick constitutions, such as was gi-

ven to Archbishops, Patriarchs, &c. or, they might esteem him (though erroneously and ignorantly) to be a Church-officer, for meddling with things incumbent to Church-officers to meddle in, without any opinion of his illimited or absolute power, even as men might err in accounting Bishops, Archbishops, Patriarchs, &c. of divine Authority, although they might disclaim antichristian tyrannous usurpation and practices in them, and seek only to have that power subservient to edification. 2. Further in fundamental doctrines they may be pure, although not altogether without errors, even as were many of the Fathers. 3. In worship they might joyn many superstitious rites, as Crosses, Altars, Bowings, &c. yet abstain from worshipping of Saints and Idols, and from accounting the Mass a propitiatory sacrifice, although they might joyn in the Eucharist, and such like. Of such sort were *Gerson, Bernard*, and some others in the midst of Popish darkness, who were not altogether free of these superstitions, yet still did check the Popish pride and usurpation, and bound their authority, and preserved the doctrine of remission of sins through faith in Christs Righteousness pure, and pressed holiness in some spiritual manner, even in the midst of many superstitions that abounded ; and whereof they were not altogether free. We suppose these last are no wayes to be classed with the former, but might have had access to Gods mercy through Christ Jesus : Because, 1. although they had errors, yet were they not such as were inconsistent with sincerity and the nature of the administration of Grace. And, 2. because they kepted the way of attaining pardon through Christ Jesus clear, which being followed by them in their practice (as no doubt it was by many) might, through Gods gracious dealing with them, make them acceptable before Him, so that their failings being of infirmity and not of malice, might not be imputed to them ; but they accepted as penitents, being sincerely affected with what they conceived to dishonour God, although they did not discern every thing that was sin against Him.

*Dist. 3.* We would distinguish Papists living so and dying so, from such as though living so, might yet by Gods Grace have repentance conferred upon them at their death. This hath been found by experience, that many who have been tenacious of the doctrines and superstitions of Popery in their life, have been yet at their death brought to abhor them, and to betake them to the Righteousness of Christ alone for their justification. These, where that Repentance and Faith were true (as no question often it was) are no wayes to be excluded, or accounted worshippers of the beast.

4. Distinguish times, some thing might through Gods Grace be more dispensed with in these times of more universal darkness, than afterward in the breaking out of light, and in Gods erecting a Standart for His Truth in the earth, and bringing forth a visible Church-state for His People to joyn in, which formerly was not : hence communion in Church-fellowship with the Church of *Rome* is much more dangerous now than formerly : which will appear, upon these considerations, 1. Because the Lord doth more peremptorily now threaten her and her followers, and addeth more severe certifications to the same, as we may see in this place : now, this is proclaimed, *If any man worship the beast, &c. the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God.* And again, *Chap. 18. 4.* 2. Their stay now is more unexcusable, because the Lord hath opened a door of freedom, and they refuse it, even as the peoples stay in *Babylon*, while the captivity lasted, was not imputed to them ; yet, staying after the proclaimed liberty, was detested, and having with it ingratitude against their Redeemer, and despising of their Redemption offered, and a willing submission to that bondage, contrary to the warning and advertisements given them, and Gods call to abandon the same. 3. After this also, things in the doctrine and worship of the Church of *Rome* became

became more deadly; for, Babylon refused to be cured, and in the Lords righteous judgement it came to pass that their doctrines became more corrupt, that thereby he might punish their contempt of and enmity at the light which he had made to shine. Hence it is that the later schoolmen, especially the Jesuits, are more corrupt than the former, as may be marked in the writings of diverse Schoolmen upon *Thomas* who do mutilate and corrupt many things in him; so as they may agree with the late determinations of the Pope, and the Council of *Trent*, and may be most opposit to those they call Hereticks: an instance whereof may be seen in *Cajetan* in 3. *Thome* qu. 48. art. 5. where explaining that assertion of *Thomas*, that only Christ ought to be called our Redeemer (which formerly we had *Bellarmini* contradicting) he layeth down, for the qualifying thereof, that bull of *Leo* the tenth concerning Indulgences and the ap-

plication of the Saints purchases to others which was sent to him when he was his Legate in *Germany*, and forceth such a sense upon *Thomas* as might agree with it. Thus also (as we may see) was done in the Council of *Trent*, where ever in all debates among Divines the most corrupt side was inclined to, and concluded. 4. Remaining in Popery now hath more contempt with it of Gods calling, and hath greater snares, as is said; and therefore hath less ground now either to expect preservation from sin and wrath, because Gods call requireth separation now more fully, and in a more distinct manner than formerly he did, as *Revel.* 18. *Come out of her, my people, be not partakers of her sin, lest ye partake of her plagues*: which doth hold forth a special hazard in reference both to sin and wrath, after the Lords making this to be proclaimed more than formerly it was.

## LECTURE IV.

*Verf. 12. Here is the patience of the Saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.*

13. *And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours and their works do follow them.*

14. *And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat, like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.*

15. *And another Angel came out of the Temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle and reap, for the time is come for thee to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.*

16. *And he that sat on the cloud, thrust in his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.*

17. *And another Angel came out of the Temple, which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.*

18. *And another Angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire, and cryed with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.*

19. *And the Angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God.*

20. *And the wine-press was troden without the city, and blood came out of the wine-press, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.*

**H**AVING shewed the foretold threatned and begun ruine of *Babylon* in the former part of the Chapter, before the Spirit describe the perfecting of that judgement, He casteth in two words needfull for the strengthening of Gods people: the first, is, *ver. 12.* and respecteth the former words, wherein *Babylons* ruine was foretold; yet, for the time, Antichrist rageth and the Saints suffer. This verse comforteth and encourageth them against that tentation, two wayes, 1. By granting that indeed this would be an occasion to exercise and try the Faith of Gods people and make it known (which an hard time doth best) whether they will keep the commands of God, in their practice making conscience of these; and the faith of *Jesus Christ*, that is, It will discover true Faith from counterfeit, and who are true professors of that Faith that is true; yet withall Gods people shall have no loss by it, it will be but

temporary, and here is their tryal, that is Gods end to exercise. Grace and duty are best tried and known in an ill time, a suffering time evidenceth honesty more than prosperity; and suffering is Gods peoples ordinary lot, whether Antichrist be falling or rising.

The second word cast in for comforting Gods people, is from the blessedness of the dead (it may be especially of these that suffered under Antichrist) that die well in that difficult time.

The first consolation is from the outgate God shall give, when these trials shall be over and Antichrist ruined. The second, from what might comfort them in hardest sufferings for the time: it is casten in here before the sad things coming be set down, for two reasons, 1. To be a warning of the high degree that these troubles would come unto, so that these that were living should count the dead happy (that died well)



who were freed from these dayes. See Solomon, Eccles. 4.

1. praising the dead more than the living.

The second thing in the scope, is, to encourage and comfort the Godly that took the right way of living, so as to die in the Lord; these troubles should not mar their blessednesse, but though the earth should triumph over them when they were dead, as Chap. 11. yet even then they were and should be blessed, and therefore needed not fear or faint under these trials which were coming.

There are four particulars in these words, 1. A preface, implying a weightinesse in that which was to be delivered. 2. A plain maxime, *Blessed, &c.* 3. A qualification not restricting that blessednesse to such a time, but shewing that it is specially agreeable and applicable to it, *from henceforth.* 4. The reasons of this application, *that they may rest.*

The preface cometh in by way of diversion, as if it were a singular thing, thereby to make what is said the more remarkable. 1. It is not *Johns* inventing, *he heard a voice.* 2. It is no earthly voice, but a sentence *from heaven*, such as should be respected. 3. what is said, is to be recorded as useful to Gods people, *write*, saith he to *John*, which, except it be some special Doctrine, is not usually repeated.

The plain Doctrine or maxime that should be written in the hearts of all Christians, is, *Blessed are they that die in the Lord.* By which words, three things are holden forth, 1. An end common to all, which is death. 2. A difference in dying, and that is to die in the Lord, which is peculiar to some, and opposite to dying in our sins, *Job. 8. 24.* as Christ saith, that is, in effect under the curse and unreconciled to God through Christ: So dying in Him, is, to be found in Him by Faith, *Philip. 3. 9.* 3. A great odds and difference of the consequents of these diverse deaths; the one are blessed, that is, fully happy, freed from all miserie and enjoying fully, unchangeably and eternally what may make them compleatly happy, even God Himself, *Matth. 5. 8.* Or, the words contain a great end men naturally aim at, to wit, Blessednesse; and, 2. the compendious clear way of attaining it by *dying in Christ*: implying, 1. a being in Him; *2 Corinth. 5. 17.* which is to be a Believer by Faith united to Him; 2. to live in Him, this is presupposed also (for, death followeth life) *Gal. 2. 24.* that is, an exercising of Faith not only for attaining spiritual life, but for the fruits and acts of it also, living like one in Christ, and by vertue of that life bringing forth fruits, *Job. 15. 4.* 3. To die then in Him, is the adding to these faith, exercising it self on Christ, in reference to death when it cometh, chearfully, willingly, boldly and confidently in the Faith of Gods promise committing it self to Him, *2 Tim. 1. 12.* as *Stephen, Acts 7.* and carrying with it the sense of its own naughtinesse, even to death, notwithstanding whereof, it resteth it self over upon His gracious promise; and, like *David*, *2 Sam. 23. 5.* dieth there contentedly; these are blessed. This in general of dying in Him. If it be applyed to such in particular, who, suffering for Him, keep faith in Him to the end, it will suite with the scope, as if he said, these that suffer for Christ rightly by persecution under Antichrist (and thus to die for Him, is to die in Him) shall be blessed, as if he had suffered under Heathens, although the world think there is a great difference.

The third, is, the qualification added with its confirmation, *yea, saith the Spirit, from henceforth, &c.* which doth not imply, that these who die in Christ, are from the time of their death blessed, as freed from that fancied Purgatory, and all labours, which certainly is Truth: otherwise neither could they from the instant of their death be called Blessed, nor yet said to be at rest from their labours. For, 1. the blessednesse here is brought in as some thing peculiarly encouraging the Godly against these coming trials. 2. The word *from henceforth* (*ἀπ' ἄρτι*, for now) looketh to the instant the prophesie re-

lateth unto, as when Christ saith, *Matth. 26. from henceforth I will not drink of the fruit of the vine*: It is, as if He had said, from this time forth; so here, otherwise it would be from thenceforth, if it related to death simply; beside, the connexion here will not agree, *that they may rest*; it is not for they shall rest: for *iva* is causally to be understood. If it be asked then, what peculiar happinesse or encouragement is holden out to the Godly under Antichrists troubles now? *Ans.* 1. It strengtheneth them against the many calumnies of persecuters, reckoning them not Martyrs, but ill doers: for now they suffer from Christians, not from Heathens as martyrs did formerly. The Spirit saith not only *before this*, but from *henceforth* shall they be fully blessed that die in Christ, even under Popes as well as Heathen Emperours. 2. They are now blessed, because freed from many great troubles, crosses and tentations that were coming on the world for rejecting the Gospel now preached, in which outward troubles the Godly living are involved, *Isa. 57. 1, 2, 3.* Their blessednesse is the more now, because hell groweth hotter, as *vers. 9, 10.* and it is more mercy to be freed of it. 4. They have this use and advantage of their pains, as to have peace and clearnesse at their death, no fear of Purgatory; and clearnesse of salvation (now after the Popish uncertainty is banished) giveth them quiet, which is a great advantage in this time; yea, whatever the world think of them who in zeal for Christ do suffer under Antichrist, God will esteem and reward (of Grace) their suffering, *Matth. 5. 16.* and take special notice of what testimonie is given for Him.

The words, *yea, saith the Spirit*, are to confirm this Truth to be divine, because the world would not believe it.

The fourth thing confirmeth these reasons, to wit, why from henceforth they are blessed, 1. They are freed from their labours, which is supposed in their life they suffered. 2. Their works do follow them; for these labours they have joy: These sufferings work to them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory; and there is a proportionableness in their glory to their suffering, *2 Corinth. 4. 17.* suitable to it, though not deserved by it, *Rom. 8. 17.* Therefore are these works said to follow in respect of the fruits of them, but not to go before as causes to procure an entry. In a word, God remembreth their good works, and in heaven they have the fruits of them, *Isa. 3. 10.*

*Vers. 14.* We come now to they last part of the Chapter, which setteth forth Gods executing His judgements against Antichrist and his kingdom in deeds, when words do not the businesse. It is set out in two similitudes, one of an harvest, whereby the world is compared to a field, the wicked to corn, and the execution of judgement to reaping, like as in the other similitude of a vintage; Both of them set out, 1. the multitude of wicked men that are like fields of corn and clusters of grapes, good men like Berries here and there. 2. A growth of sin and an height of ripenesse that it cometh unto, as corns at harvest. 3. A readinesse of judgement and easinesse of executing it, as with a sickle: both which similitudes are borrowed from *Jael 3. 13.* *Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe, come get you down: for the presse is full,* that is, for the wickednesse is great: and (*Jer. 51. 33.*) the like is spoken of Babylon.

For understanding of this obscure place (as soberly we ought to search in what is apparently to come, for the most part, if not for all) we would consider and observe these four things concerning it.

1. That both these similitudes hold forth wrath and sad judgements to come. 1. concerning the last it is certain: for, what is gathered is cast in the wine-press of Gods wrath, and the similitudes are every way alike, harvest and vintage; sharp sickles are the instruments, and they are both ripe. Beside, these places, *Joth. 3. 13.* and *Jer. 51. 33.* hold out an harvest

harvest of wrath when wickednesse is ripe, which similitudes may well be made use of here, when there is clearly an allusion to Babylon: So they seem to be of one nature, though different in degree. Again, the scope here cleareth it, for, it is the fulfilling of these former threatenings of the preceeding Angels, and the summary expression of what followeth in the vials, which are degrees of the same judgement, which ascendeth from the lesse to the greater, as the exposition will clear.

2. Consider, that though both hold out judgements, yet apparently different judgements, not in kind, or object; But, 1. in degree, the vintage is a greater judgement, as the close of all. 2. In time; as it is greater, so it is after, as the vintage is after the harvest in the season of it. 3. It is like also different in the instruments or inferiour agents: therefore it is said, *another Angel*. 4. The harvest is ripe, but the vintage is fully ripe; sin is at a greater height. 5. The first instrument, is a sickle, *vers. 15.* but the second, a sharp sickle, *vers. 18.* when the commission is given to thrust in.

3. Consider, that Antichrist and his kingdom is the object of both, 1. It is the scope here: for it is *Babylon* and her worshippers who were threatened by the former Angels. 2. When it is further explained and enquired into, it will be found to be the same under the vials, *Chap. 16.* and *Chap. 19.* which is cleare to be on the beasts Kingdom.

4. To enquire more particularly, unto what particular judgements and times they relate. In short, we conceive them to hint at the judgements under the seventh trumpet, and enlarged under the vials, *Chap. 16.* yet more particularly to hold out the last judgements on the beast and his kingdom, but not the last on the world: for, 1. this judgement of the vintage seemeth to be the battel of *Armageddon*, largely profecuted, *Chap. 19. vers. 10.* as appeareth by *vers. 15.* of that Chapter: he hath for his name to tread the *wine-press of the wrath of God*; and His Armies followed Him for the executing of this same judgement on the whore or beast. Now, this being a finall judgement on the beast, it can probably be no other so likely as this, where Christ doth the thing, from which He hath that name, *vers. 16. Chap. 19.* yet this belongeth to the sixth vial, probably there being a large description of many things after this, and a new battel of *Gog and Magog*, *Chap. 20. vers. 8.* and then the end cometh, *vers. 9, 10, &c.* 2. Then will it follow, that by the harvest is meant the judgement of the beasts teat under the fifth vial, that being the other remarkable stroak on Antichrist (to wit, the first harvest) on his teat or state; or, more generally, it may take in Gods first judgements on him which yet do not destroy him: and so the vintage will be more universal on him and his followers.

The scope and sum then will turn to this, 1. That when Antichrist groweth worse by the Word, the Lord will severely by judgements execute wrath on him and his, and that certainly and sickerly. 2. To shew by what method the Lord will proceed, first, by lesser judgements, then by greater, He will make a full end in due time when all is ripe, He will take them as they ripen. 3. By what means, some executing, some praying, and Christ Himself over-ruling all.

We come to the words. The 1. judgement is set down, *vers. 14, 15, and 16.* containing, 1. the person executing this judgement. 2. the incitement he hath to it, *vers. 15.* 3. the execution, *vers. 16.*

The person is described in the 14. *vers.* beside a preface of *Johns*, *I looked, and behold*, which should make this to be observed. The person executing the judgement is set out in four properties. If it be asked, who it is? For Answer, We conceive Christ to be principally meant here, yet so as inferiour agents, who are made use of by Him who is the principal, are not to be secluded. That He is principally understood, will appear, 1. By comparing this treading with that

name Christ getteth, *Chap. 19. 15.* He treadeth who is *the Lord of Lords*. 2. The properties agree well and only to Him principally, 1. He *rideth on a cloud* when He cometh to judgement, *Isa. 19. 1.* none hath such a Throne as He, and He is said to come in the clouds with Power and great Glory, *Matth. 25.* It is called a *cloud* and a *white cloud*, 1. To shew Sovereignty and Glory in the Judge. 2. Speedinesse and swiftnesse in coming to execute. 3. By *whiteness* is meant not only gloriousnesse but innocency and straightnesse of proceeding. Second property, He *is like the Son of man*: by which title Christ is described, *Chap. 1. vers. 13.* and it can well agree to none other. Third property, He *hath a golden crown on His head*; signifying, 1. Authority, He is a crowned King and that with a crown of gold, signifying statelinesse, *Psal. 21.* and prosperous successe in His undertakings and conquests. Fourth property, He *hath in his hand a sharp sickle*, that is, an instrument wherewith they used to reap, as we mow hay with a syth. By this is set out Christs readinesse, furniture and power to execute judgement on wicked men: as readily and easily as a man cutteth down grasse or corn with a sharp sickle, he will mow them down.

Yet though we look upon Christ as a principal agent, we do not exclude inferiour instruments. Hence the second Angel which cometh out to the vintage, is so described as the inferiour agents are, yet in that Christ is chief, as is said. Beside, (*Chap. 17.*) it is said, God shall put it in the hearts of Kings to execute judgement on the whore and hate her: and, it is like, Christ now appearing with a crown as a King, may signifie his use-making of such, and so appearing as King of Kings (*Chap. 19.*) in this work.

2. The incitation that Christ getteth to delay no longer, *vers. 15.* hath these two things, 1. the party urging 2. the motives, used to perswade Him. The party is an *Angel*, and that out of the Temple: by an *Angel*, we understand, as formerly, some Minister or Ministers, as mouths of Congregations, interposing with Christ seriously to execute His wrath. This their prayer suiteth with the Saints practice pointed at *Chap. 16.* See also, *Jer. 33.* It agreeth well also with the practice of Saints under Antichrist, and with the Lords way of stirring up people to pray before he deliver fully, *Dan. 9. 23.* for, this voice being to Christ from an Angel that cometh out of the Church (represented by the Temple, because in it Ministers of old used there to serve) it must necessarily be vented in praying and not in commanding. And the Angel must be no proper Angel but a figurative, as before. By *his coming out of the Temple*, also may be holden forth, 1. their joynt concurrence in that suit who were in the Church. 2. A liberty that was now in professing such petitions, whereas before they were shut up in the Temple, *Chap. 11. 1.*

This Angels speech containeth, 1. his suit, *Thrust in thy sickle, delay no longer.* 2. The motives or reasons (for we ought to seek nothing especially of this kind, but what is well grounded) are two in general, *The time for thee to reap is come, holding forth,* 1. that there was time set to the judgement. 2. When it is come, then it is time to pray, as *Dan. 9. 3.* with 2. This word, *the time for thee*, seemeth to point out one especially interested in this office, which must be Christ. The 2. motive is more particular, confirming the former, *for the harvest of the earth is ripe.* By *harvest* is understood in the Prophets, especially speaking of *Babylon*, as was said, a full return of judgement, *Jer. 51. 33.* By *ripenesse* is understood a fulnesse and height of sin, *Joel 3.* so together holding forth ripe sin, and ready judgement; sin hath its sowing and growth and ripening, and so wrath answerable is treasured up till the harvest time, as God said of the *Amorites*, *Gen. 15.* their cup was not full; and sin may belong in ripening for hundreds of years. There is a set time for mercy, *Psal. 102.* and a set time



time for judgement also. The meaning in short is, Antichrists sin is become great, aggregated with many circumstances, as now ripened; and when our Lord appeared as on His way to execute judgement, His Church and People stepped in to beg that it might be so, which accordingly (*vers. 16.*) is granted; and fields of wicked men are destroyed, possibly that which Antichrist lived on; and the harvest he had in the earth by Gods judgements was destroyed. However, what the Angel had to execute, is instantly done upon that petition, and accordingly it followeth, (*vers. 16.*) in two things, according to commission he putteth in his sickle. Then *the earth was reaped*, easily was the judgement executed which he intended: there is no more, but *it was reaped*; when he beginneth, he maketh an end.

*Ver. 17.* The second similitude followeth of the vintage, which is both a forer degree of judgement and posteriour to the former; sin being now riper, even fully ripe, These grapes of Sodom are cut down, gathered and cast into the wine-press of Gods wrath, it being usual to the Prophets to use this similitude, *Isa. 63. 2, 3, 4.*

It hath also three parts. 1. The executioner is described, *v. 17.* 2. His incitement to proceed, *vers. 18.* 3. The execution. This executioner is an Angel, yet diversly described from the former, and called *another*: yet comparing it with *Chap. 19. 15.* Christ must be understood as principal, but seeing He doth these works mediately (as in that same Chapter by Armies on horseback) sometimes He is represented, because they act by Him; sometimes the types more formally represent them who are agents, because he maketh use of them: however when He is represented, they are not secluded, & *contra*; He is not when the types resemble them most; and the putting these two agents together, it sheweth that though Christ doth by instruments, yet that Himself first appeareth, because the work was great and the Church weak; extraordinarily He beginneth but when the Church multiplieth, He provideth Him instruments out of her.

The instrument, or agent, is called an *Angel* (as these who pour out the vials are) yet we conceive them not to be understood as properly so; (seeing battels and horses are not obscurely mentioned here, and (*Chap. 19.*) to be made use of in the execution of these plagues) but the manner, of the expression of things in this Book, is in the terms of heaven. It pointeth at some fit ready instrument Jesus Christ shall have to make use of when He shall have to do, one or more to cut down and cast these grapes in the wine-press; but (*Chap. 19.*) He treadeth it Himself. Two things are spoken concerning this Angel, 1. He came out of the Temple which is in heaven, that is, some member or members of His Church, here called heaven: for it was the wine of the earth, that is, of the wicked, and not of the Church, which was to be gathered. 2. He is armed even with a *sharp sickle*, (such as Christ had) to shew it was that same power whereby this instrument acted, the armour and strength was of the supream Agent. Hence, *Chap. 19.* (which we take to be the same judgement with this, and ending Gods controversie on the beast) He as King rideth foremost, and the Armies of heaven follow Him to this battel: yet none have armes but He, and we cannot conceive them acting but He is on their head. Hence we may think it the lesse absurdity that the petition again for furtherance of the work is renewed to this Angel, although it be not absurd to conceive this Angel to be a Minister of the Gospel (as Levites served at the altar) giving direction to such as Christ should choose to execute His judgements, as one of the beasts giveth the Angels the vials, *Chap. 15. 7.* and so his power over the fire will be to be understood, as *Chap. 11.* of the Witnesses their having power over fire and diverse other plagues.

*Ver. 18.* The incitation is renewed: God will be called on

in every step. In which ye have, 1. The suiter described. 2. The suit and its reasons are set down; both which differ from what is spoken of by the former intercessour, *vers. 15.* the suiter is called an *Angel*, but hath two peculiar properties, 1. He cometh forth from the altar, which importeth some more retired, secret, holy place than the Temple: we can expound it no otherwise than we did, *Chap. 6. 9, 10.* in the fifth seal, to hold out heaven, ordinarily set out by the most holy. 2. He had power over the fire: not as one peculiarly separated to govern that element, nor one commissioned to execute judgement himself by fire, properly or figuratively to be understood; for then he needed not deal with him who is properly commissioned for that end: and that Angel (*Chap. 16.*) is called the Angel of the waters; not as having a peculiar charge ordinarily of them or over them, but as peculiarly commissioned in reference to them with his vial (yet it is not properly to be understood of waters, as will appear) it holdeth out then (to speak so) some contest and fight they had with fire, and that the fire did not prevail over them, but they overcame it by the blood of the Lamb, *Chap. 12. 11.* and by their faith and patience (*Heb. 11.*) being invincibly armed against all torments. In a word, we take it to be the reviving of the Martyrs cry, which was against heathen persecuters, *Chap. 6.* Now, their number is compleat, and there is not that ground of suspending the judgement which was given in that place. This cometh to remembrance before God, who findeth in her the blood of all Prophets and Apostles, because they have served themselves heires to all; and this guilt hath a loud cry before the Lord to procure the hastening and closing of Antichrists judgement. So the first Angel setteth out the cry of all the Church Militant; the second more especially of sufferers Triumphant. See *Chap. 6.* This Angels suit in two things differeth from and goeth beyond the former, 1. The suit is, *thrust in thy sharp sickle*, it was simply *sickle* before: This is added to shew a severity in this judgement, and a holy pressing in this Angel beyond the former. 2. The grapes are said to be *fully ripe*, so there needeth no longer waiting. The harvest was ripe before, now the grapes are fully ripe, for they have had more time. 2. They had more means, and former lesser judgements were despised. 3. They have had more light by what hath past. 4. More wickedness hath fallen in their hand notwithstanding and out over the belly of that light, especially persecution: and now the number of the Witnesses or Martyrs seemeth to be nigh compleat, and therefore the sin is riper now than it was, *Chap. 6.* or yet under the former similitude. Thus, as it were, heaven and earth concur to pull down Antichrist.

The execution followeth, *vers. 19, and 20.* in which these things are considerable, 1. There is no longer delay, but judgement is immediately executed; ripe sin and a sinning people, hasten wrath. See *Psal. 119. 126.* *It is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they make void thy Law.* And no sooner is the execution begun but in its due order and time it is finished. And the vine is gathered: Judgement never misseth its end. 2. The vine is not only cut down and gathered, but it is cast in the wine-press of Gods wrath, that is, brought or put in the place where God executeth His judgements on them, which as it is temporal, is (*Chap. 19.*) called *Armageddon*; and as it is eternal, its the lake *Chap. 19. 20.* which certainly is the last result. 3. This wine-press is trod, *vers. 20.* (following the similitude) and it sheweth that Christs wrath who is the treader, shall pursue them terribly. 4. It is trodden without the city: It is like so was their presses in their vineyards, for to be near them. It signifieth here, 1. a fit place, set apart for executing wrath on them. 2. a shutting them out as polluted, from His Church here and heaven hereafter: so the lake is opposed (*Chap. 20.*) to entering into the holy Jerusalem, a separating of them from His people in that judgment, that the city should have no hurt by it.

5. The terribleness of the effect and judgement is described in three things, 1. *That blood came out*: that sheweth that a proper judgement on men is to be understood here. 2. It was to the *horse-bridles*, so very deep: which would be compared with *Chap. 19. 15. &c.* Where Christ there trodeth this press; and his followers are mounted on horse-back for pursuing this victory: the blood is so deep on the fields, and the slaughter so great, that it choaketh up to the horse-bridles

of these who pursue. 3. This deepness of the blood its running, was not a furlong or two, but 1600. *furlongs*, counting eight furlongs to a mile. It is two hundred miles, a long way a definite space (or an indefinite, but great, and setting out great slaughter of enemies, so that all the fowls are invited to a feast, *Chap. 19.* In a word, it is a dreadful judgement on the beast and his followers, most certainly to come.

# LECTURE I.

## CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. **A**nd I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

2. And I saw as it were a sea of glass, mingled with fire, and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

3. And they sung the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways thou King of Saints.

4. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all Nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy judgements are made manifest.



T the close of the 11. Chapter, when the seventh trumpet did sound, we told you that the order and series of the story of the events would have required a present entering into the particular description of the last two, which here is called the last plagues, but that it might be the clearer, the explicatory prophesie and vision is cast in, *Chap.*

12, 13, and 14. as the first great sign that was seen after the founding of the seventh trumpet: and when that is sufficiently done, he returneth in the fifth vision, to set down the third and last principal prophesie, which is (as the other two) set down in seven types, and hath its preparation, making way to it as they had. So it is formally in the series knit to the 11. *Chap.* at the close, where the Temple is opened: then followeth thunders, generally intimating judgements: Now, it is set down what judgements, and this vision declareth these by bringing seven Angels out of the Temple thus opened with wrath, which is the same hinted at there; and *Chap. 14.* from *ver. 15.* See *Chap. 11. ver. 15.*

This principal prophesie is contained, *Chap. 14.* and 16. in the fifth vision it hath its preparation and execution. The preparation hath three steps, 1. more generally giving a little view and sum of it, *ver. 1, 2, 3, 4.* of this Chapter. 2. More particularly, describing its instruments and concomitants, *ver. 5, 6, 7, 8.* The third is a plain giving of the word to these instruments thus made ready, *Chapter 16. ver. 1.*

The more general proposition of this vision, is set down in two things; or, is two wayes expressed, first, *ver. 1.* that now John saw, after much delay, these who had the last plagues to execute, making for it. The verse containeth three things, 1. Johns designing this vision, to make men the more attentive, *I saw* (saith he) *another sign*, that is, somewhat appearing not accidentally, or from natural causes, but purposely appointed to signify something: It is *another*, that is, different both in type and signification from what was *Chap. 12. 1.* It is

called *great and marvellous*, in respect of the events especially which it foretelleth, to wit, Gods wrath upon the Beast and his kingdom, to their very overturning and crooking of a Church and Kingdom unto Jesus Christ on his ruins. Which considering the beasts grandour in the world and the way of Gods bringing that destruction about, will be a very wonderful thing. 2. The thing is hinted at in general, *seven Angels having the seven last plagues*; where is summed the last wrath and judgements of Antichrist: in that respect they are called *the last plagues*. The instruments are *Angels*: it may be God will make use of Angels, yet not only or immediately. Therefore by *Angels* may be understood whomsoever God shall make Ministers of his wrath, probably Members of his Church, as Kings. (*Chap. 17.*) that are made to hate the whore and do his pleasure on her. See *Chap. 14. 13. & 19. 14.* They are *seven*, to shew different judgements or several degrees to be poured out.

The last thing in the verse, is the reason why they are called the last plagues, *because in them is filled up the wrath of God*, that is, not only is their wrath in them, but such wrath as will consummate what wrath here-away God determineth for the beast till he be cast into the lake; there will be no judgement here, after these come, neither will there be place for them. These plagues will make a full end.

*Ver. 2.* The second general way, whereby he giveth a forecast of what these vials bring, is a little hint at the flourishing and gladsome condition of the Church, as well as of the hard things which were to come on her enemies: which two ordinarily go together, and usually by anticipation are set down in a Song. It is an allusion to *Moses* and *Israels* way of coming out of *Egypt*, who, when they past the Sea, wherein their enemies were destroyed, did sing: so the redeemed, when they shall be delivered out of spiritual *Egypt*, and be put on the shore beyond their trials, they shall sing and have no less cause to sing, and shall do it as surely as ever *Moses* did, *Exod. 15.* The one delivery shall be as certain, great and welcome as the other. Particularly, in it consider, 1. who do sing, they are *they*



who have gotten the victory over the beast, and his image, his mark and number : by these are understood not only such as were ever kepted from Antichrist his pollution, but all that shall be under the seventh trumpet, as brought out from under that tyranny, as the allusion to the people of Israel's coming out of Egypt cleareth. They are thus described particularly, to shew they are such whom neither the Popes flatterers, nor terrors, nor Church threatnings could prevail over; but through Grace they prevailed over all, though for a time they fought.

These four things over which they get the victory, signifie the same corruption of Antichrist, that in no respect its deadly poison did stick to them.

After he hath described these fingers by their victory, as full by renouncing and abhorring Popery in all the branches of it, They are, Secondly, set out in that posture they were in, They were standing on a sea of glass mingled with fire. Three things are to be enquired here, 1. What this sea of glass is? 2. What it is to stand on it? 3. What it is to be mingled with fire?

First, By this sea, or great vessel of glass, we shew (Chap. 4.) was understood the efficacy of the blood of Jesus Christ, by which only his people and their sacrifices can be washen and sanctified; and of this we gave the reasons there, and here also it may be confirmed: For, first, this standing upon the sea of glass denoteth the excellency and firmness of the foundation upon which they stand. 2. If we consider parallel places, it is in express terms expounded, Chap. 7. 14. when this same company and their victory are described, this is given as the ground thereof, they are come out of great tribulation, and have washen their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb: so (Chap. 12. 11.) it is said that they overcame by the blood of the Lamb, &c. And this being marked as the ground which secureth these redeemed ones; it must be for this purpose, to shew that the way and manner of their getting victory over the beast, and their security against him, did consist in their fleeing to, and resting upon, Christ Jesus his satisfaction and Righteousness, while the rest of the Antichristian world were blindfolded in ignorance and error, going about to establish their own righteousness, as it were, by the works of the Law. 3. It is confirmed from that, Chap. 4. where this sea of glass is described to be before the Throne: which signifieth their abiding near unto God in these times of defections, when all generally went a. whoring from him, b. wondering after the beast.

Secondly, standing upon this sea of glass, doth import, 1. A confidence in them, in their braking them to that shore, as it were; the Believer never harketh till he be on Christ, but is ever fleeing toward him, and then he standeth. 2. It importeth a confidence that they have, as now defying Antichrist through the vertue of that blood, and an exulting in God who had brought them to that land; and this hath some allusion to the peoples practice, Exod. 15. 3. It implyeth an efficacy and vertuousness, to say so, in this sea of glass, that being for excellency like glass, is yet able to support all the redeemed and to keep them from drowning. Lastly, (which is clear from the scope) it importeth their publick owning of the truth of Gods which was contradicted and opposed by Antichrist and his followers, whereas they had not appeared so openly to bear testimony to it before. By this sea of glass cannot be understood the world: Because, 1. this sea of glass is mentioned as that which supporteth them, and the basis upon which they are builded, which will not agree to this uncertain world. 2. It is spoken of as a piece of their adorning, and that which separateth them from Antichrist, and keepeth them as contradistinct from his company, which will not be so clear from the other interpretation. 3. This sea of glass, upon which they stand, is said to be mingled with fire. By fire must be under-

flood somewhat suitable to this sea. Now, Chap. 4. where this sea is spoken of verse 6. lamps of fire are spoken of as burning before the Throne, which are the seven spirits of God: hence it will follow, that by fire here is understood a sanctifying efficacy of the spirit of Jesus, which is often compared in Scripture to fire, I will baptize you with the holy Ghost, and with fire. And so this is the meaning, I saw the redeemed put beyond the difficulties of Antichrist, and out of the hazard of his curse, by the vertue of Christs blood justifying them, and by the vertue of his spirit sanctifying them: and I saw them publicly appearing, and confidently giving testimony to the truth, as not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; and this is added to distinguish these truly redeemed from carnal and presumptuous hypocrites, who boast of faith and their standing upon the sea of glass; but do evidence that that sea is not mingled with fire and the spirit of Sanctification, and therefore is not that foundation which will give them ground to tune their harps and sing before God: further it may signifie Christs making use of the cross to promote his peoples Sanctification, which is subordinate and subservient to the former.

In the last part of the Verse they are said to have the harps of God, while they stand upon the sea of glass; this sheweth that the former ground must be something which giveth them very great cheerfulness, and agreeth well with their having palms in their hands, who are spoken of, Chap. 7. 14. and are said to have washen their cloaths in the blood of the Lamb. And this phrase importeth, 1. That their harps were excellent; so the phrase in Scripture, is often, when it would commend the excellency of things, to call them things of God, that is, most excellent. 2. It importeth it to be of Gods giving; nor a harp put in their hand, or, a song put in their mouth by Antichrist or the world; but by God himself: and this is their advantage that their songs and mirth is communicate to them by God, and so cannot be interrupted by the world.

Then he cometh, ver. 3. and 4. to describe the Song, 1. It is generally, the song of Moses, that is, having the like occasion and subject which he had; Exod. 15. 2. It is the song of the Lamb, that is, such a Song as Christ hath given the occasion of, the most cheerful Song he hath put in our mouth that ever was. His Song, first, because he, by furnishing the occasion, putteth it in our mouths; Psal. 40. 3. And secondly, by his Spirit he helpeth to sing it. Thirdly, He is the great subject of it.

2. The matter of the Song, is more particularly set forth in it self, which expresseth three things, or three wayes speaketh to the scope, 1. By commending these Works of Gods justice and him the author, 2. By shewing the glorious effects of them. 3. The special cause having influence to produce these effects: in all which there is a special likeness to their Song, Chap. 11. as was noted there, 1. Gods works (that is, these specially that are hinted at in this type of the vials) are called by them great and marvellous. 1. Great, because no mean power could overturn such an established Kingdom so easily as he did the beasts, that is indeed a great work. 2. Marvellous, breeding admiration, even such as should make men and angels admire Gods Wisdom, Patience, Power, Justice, &c. that suffered this beast to thrive so long, and now in his height taketh such order with him. Therefore an epithete suitable to this work is given to God, Lord God Almighty; because in this great work, omnipotency manifesteth it self; and that it was done by him who could do whatsoever he pleaseth: So in this they ascribe the power to God, and commend his works. They add just and true are thy wayes, two other epithetes.

1. Just, for it was well deserved; there was no wrong done to the beast by any of these vials.

2. True, i.e. conform in all things to Thy promises made to thy people, and threatnings against thy enemies, it is not works in particular

particular but *ways* that are commended, that is, all the strain of Thy proceeding since the beginning is just and true even as this; so they take occasion from the particular, to bless God for all the way of His providence in all things: Thus these who pray for Antichrists ruine, (*Chap. 14.*) do now praise. The name they ascribe to God is suitable, *Thou King of Saints*, who by Thy just way deserveth to be called so. He is King of Saints, 1. Because He loveth holiness and these that are so. 2. Because He defendeth them and opposeth their enemies and the enemies of holiness, as here He hath made it appear; so that though He be King over all the world, yet He hath a special dominion over and singular care of Saints, and these who are Godly (*Psal. 4.*) He setteth them apart for Himself: and this title hath a kindly claim unto God in the bosome of it, as well as it sheweth what a holy King He is, who in His Sovereignty will acknowledge no proper subjects but Saints. Hence here He is *King of Saints*, whereas (*Jer. 10. 7.*) He is King of Nations: because there it is a fruit of common providence that He is commended from, as the giving of rain; here it is a peculiar appearing for, and owning of His Church, expressing not only power but holiness in His way, and that in a special manner.

This commendation is amplified in the effects; *vers. 4.* setting out wonderfully their heightening of these wonderful works of God in two expressions, having every one of them their reasons.

First, *who will not, or, shall not fear thee?* were Thou and Thy works well known, are there any so brutish, or stupid, but they must needs praise and fear Thee and glorify Thy Name and think much of Thee? they do not declare the event, that every one (*de facto*) shall do so; but (*de jure*) they say there is reason it should be so, and hope that now much more of

this should be than ever before. The reason is, for Thou only art holy, that is, Thou art essentially, infinitely and unchangeably holy, which no creature is; and now by Thy owning of Thy people, and executing judgement so justly, Thou declarest Thy self to be so, yea only so; None in all the world could have guided things in such a great confusion so, and brought them to such an holy end, as we see now Thou hast done: before we were in hazard of mistaking Thee who art holy and true, *Chap. 6.* as if Thou had too long delayed it, yet now we see that in purest holiness Thou hast ordered all without any wrong.

The second expression amplifying the effect, is, *All nations shall worship before thee*: the reason is, for thy judgements are made manifest: In a word, this glorious work will make way for bringing in Nations to the Church, seeing by this expression of Thy holiness Thou hast manifested Thy self a just God, and publicly made it appear Thou wilt be avenged upon Antichrist for all his wrongs, which hath been formerly obscured; but now by taking to Thee Thy great Power, as *Chap. 11.* it is evident. And so from such manifestations of the Holiness and Justice of God in His judgements, they argue to the greatness of His praise and the enlargement of His Kingdom, which cannot but follow on such rare works of Justice, seeing God is known by the judgements which He executeth, *Psal. 6.*

In sum, the Song saith, God wonderfully judgeth the whore, whereupon shall follow enlargement, increase and joy to the Church, which shall be a ground to them of rendering praise to this purpose (though not in these very words) to God. Which Song would be considered in the matter of it, and in the manner, wherein exceeding high and heavenly thoughts of God appear in a heart that cannot satisfy it self in praising Him.

## LECTURE. II.

*Vers. 5. And after that I looked, and behold, the Temple of the Tabernacle of the testimonie in heaven was opened:*

6. *And the seven Angels came out of the Temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.*

7. *And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven Angels, seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.*

8. *And the Temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power, and no man was able to enter into the Temple, till the seven plagues of the seven Angels were fulfilled.*

**T**his Chapter (as was said) containeth the preparation to the prophetic of the seven vials, whereby the last wrath of God is fulfilled on the beast and his kingdom. The more general part of this, is past in the preceeding verses: These verses do more particularly set forth the preparation, in these four, 1. in the rise of all, which is the *Temples opening*, or the change of the outward face of the Church. 2. The description of the seven Angels that were instruments, *vers. 6.* 3. The furnishing of them for their task and work. 4. A concomitant going alongst with the execution of their judgement.

The first thing, is (*vers. 5.*) the antecedent to all these plagues, which is the rise of all, that is, the *opening of the Temple*. That this is antecedent, appeareth by the context, where this opening is observed to clear what followeth concerning the Angels coming forth, as a prior step of the narration in order before their coming forth.

For understanding of it, we would consider that there is an allusion (as *Chap. 11. vers. ult.*) to the Jewish Church, where in time of Idolatry and backsliding the Temple was shut, as in *Ahabs* dayes; and in time of Reformation when all was brought again to the rule, the Temple was opened and sanctified, the Sacrifices put in order, and the Priests sanctified, as in *Hezekiahs* dayes. *Johns* meaning is, before this, the Temple was shut, Religion, in its outward splendor and beauty, defaced by Antichrist; but now (as if he said) I saw a time of Reformation, when superstition and Idolatry was banished, and Purity and Truth preached in open view, as it was before Antichrist darkened their light. Thus, as the Temple was that which most evidenced the state of the Jewish Church, and the changes were most sensibly observed there; so (as many other things) that is borrowed to set out the change in the Christian Church here. See more, *Chap. 11. vers. 19.* This



This step of preparation concerning the publick breaking out of the Truth, is observed for these reasons, 1. To shew to what time these vials belong; to wit, to the state of the Church after Antichrists treachery is discovered, and God hath made some light to break out in His Church, to wit, to the last period. 2. To shew the connexion of these vials with, and their dependence upon, the blowing of the seventh trump, Chap. 11. last *vers.* where this same is mentioned: Now after a profitable digression, when he cometh again to the series of the prophesie, he beginneth (as it were) where he left, so to carry it on from thence forward the more clearly.

The second thing will clear this, after this Temple is opened, and Religion in heaven (that is, in the visible Church) is publicly professed, the Lord bringeth out seven Angels out of the opened Temple. These are the instruments of this wrath, mentioned, *vers.* 1. They are described by these things, 1. They are called *Angels*: we think not properly, but figuratively, such as He had fitted for this work and commissioned to execute it, whether Ministers or Magistrates. Their getting their vials from one of the beasts, and their being arrayed with girdles, seemeth to confirm this; and more especially, that they were great civil men. 2. They are described from whence they came, *They came out of the Temple*, that is, (as it appeareth) they shall be members of the Church (now made patent) who are to be made use of in these judgements to execute His wrath on the whore. 3. They are clothed with *linen*, either to shew the purity of their proceeding, or alluding to the Priests habit, *Ezek. 44.* as that of *golden girdles* alludeth to the manner of Kings. So these are Kings and Priests authorized and well furnished for such a work: all whom He employed, are fitted instruments for His work.

The third circumstance of their further preparation, is mentioned, *vers.* 7. where two things are to be observed, 1. The instruments, or means of the plagues which they had to execute them with, that is, *vials full of wrath*. Vials are great hollow vessels or cups, wide at the mouth: whereby is meant, 1. great wrath. 2. an easie and quiet way of pouring it forth without great noise, possibly, having respect to the threatening, Chap. 14. where they are threatened with the cup of Gods wrath. These are called *golden vials*, partly because Justice in it self is precious, and it is an excellent dignity and honourable to be made use of in its execution, especially as approved instruments; partly, to shew Gods pure proceeding without the least mixture of any passion.

2. These vials are given by one of the beasts: it is like the first beast (as one day of the week, is the first day, *Matth. 28.*) which (Chap. 4.) is the type of valiant, bold and zealous Ministers. They are said to give these Angels these vials, when by and from Gods Word they clear that to be their duty, and in Gods Authority calleth them to it. By which it would seem that God would not have Kings and Princes waiting for an extraordinary revelation and call to awake to this judgment, but to acquiesce in ordinary Ministers, clearing His Truth from His Word; and thus, though Ministers be not to execute wrath actually and immediately by fighting, yet do they (as it were) blow the trumpets, *2 Chronicles 13.* and so they set up and

cast down Kings and Kingdoms, *Jer. 1.* and their sword slayeth more than *Haggels*. Thus it would seem, when eminent men are converted and ingrafted in the Church, zealous Ministers do put them in mind of this duty that God expecteth from the Kings of the earth; such zealous men have been, and particularly were after the begun opening of the Temple. God is said here to live for ever and ever; partly, to shew that He is reverently alway to be spoken of; partly, to shew what Master these Angels had, and whose wrath they were executing: not their own. Therefore they should not be in their zeal selfish and carnal, but it was Gods wrath and the wrath of such a great God; and therefore they had need to be single and humble, as others had reason to be afraid of such everlasting wrath. That denomination of God, addeth to the helgh-tening of the wrath.

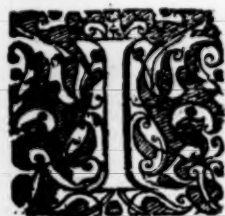
The fourth thing, which is the concomitant of these plagues, is *vers.* 8. containing, 1. the concomitant itself. 2. its effect. The concomitant, is, *the Temple is filled with smoke*: this alludeth to Gods way of old, making His presence sensible by signs in the Tabernacle, when it was newly erected, as *Exod. 40.* and in the Temple, when it was newly builded, as *2 King. 8. 10.* So here, when the Gospel-church shall be of new recovered, Gods presence will be as sensible and great in it, as it was of old, when Priests might not enter into the Temple because of the glory of it. Sometimes also this appearance, is a sign of anger, as *Numbers 16.* when He appeared to take vengeance on stubborn offenders, and would admit of no intercession: These being not inconsistent, but ordinarily conjoynd, to wit, Gods presence, glorious and refreshing to His own, and terrible and dreadful to His enemies, *1/a. 66. 5.* we understand both here: which agreeth well with the words following, *filled with smoke*, from the glory of God, that looketh to His gracious appearing, and from His power that holdeth Him forth terrible, as now appearing to exercise His power for comfort to His people and terror to His enemies. And so the effect agreeth to this, *There was no man that was able to enter into the Temple, till the seven plagues were fulfilled*: which sheweth the degree or measure of that glory of Gods appearing: It was extraordinary, as was in these times, *Exod. 40.* and *1 King. 8.* before mentioned, it is not to be understood as if none now were in the Temple (the Church hath her own indwellers then) but that amongst them without, against whom these plagues were directed, none of them, or few of them, got Repentance to flee in for making peace with God in Christ. But these plagues, being against obstinate contemners of the light of the Word, now such a spiritual smoke of ignorance and hardness of heart was on them, and possibly of darkness and contention in the Church, so that through Gods judgement on them they fretted under these plagues and perished, but repented not, as we will see particularly observed, Chap. 16. or, none could enter, &c. that is, God would admit none to make intercession for preventing these plagues (as *Moses* and the Priests in such cases entered the Tabernacle to interceed) until the wrath threatened was executed: and so none could enter till then, will be this, they could never enter for that purpose, as the word is taken, *2 Samuel 6. vers. last.*

## LECTURE I.

## CHAP. XVI.

Verf. 1. **A**Nd I heard a great voice out of the Temple, saying to the seven Angels, Go your wayes and poure out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

2 And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth, and their fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his Image.



**I**N this 16. Chapter is prosecuted the execution of these last plagues from *vers. 2.* In the 1. *vers.* there is the last step of preparation for it, by commissioning these Angels who were instruments presently to fall about it. The voice seemeth to be Christs, called a great voice out of the Temple: partly to shew His earnestness in the thing He calleth unto. Whether this be immediately from Christ, or mediately by His Ministers in His Church, (which is most like) It is all one, seing it is Christs Word and hath his warrant. The commission is limited, *to poure them out on the earth*, that is, such a part of the world as is contradistinguished from the Church, which is called heaven; for, afterward some are poured on the Sea, some in the Air, &c. for, though the antichristian world be a compleat world in it self; yet, being compared with the Church, it is but the earth: *Out of the Temple*, because there of old God gave Oracles; it is in allusion to that. Before we speak particularly of these vials, we shall premit some general considerations useful for understanding of them, or some general observations concerning them.

1. As all these vials speak wrath, and the last wrath, so do they all speak wrath principally against the beast as the object of it, with his kingdom and followers, as those who have his name, mark, character, &c. The first vial is poured on the earth of that kingdom, and of the second, 3. and 7. it is clear; His wrath is perfected against the whore by these, therefore that Song (*Chap. 18. and 19.*) is as the result of these judgements; for, they are such judgements as are not common to others, but peculiarly affect Him and His. Therefore in the fourth vial, it is said, *the men (oi ανθρωποι)* particularly relating to men mentioned before, to wit; these that were marked with his mark, which will afterward be more clear: Yet let this have three caveats, 1. The Church wanteth not her exercises, even in the time of these vials, as was clear from *Chap. 14. 11.* she hath her enemies and battels there, but they all end in and tend to her enlargement in the close. 2. Though they aim principally at Antichrist as the chief enemy, yet other enemies do not escape unpunished, but are made sharers in the judgement also, under them, especially in the 6. and 7. vials which are more general, as will appear, and take in more enemies. 3. It is not to be understood, that they so carry on the the beasts ruine, as that it is alway sensible; he still fighteth and may have his own seeming advantages to harden him, as if he might recover, which yet shall never be, but by this God hath the more glory in renewing his battels against him, as he had against Pharaoh by multiplying his judgements against him, unto which there is an allusion here.

2. It would be Observed; that the kingdom of the beast, when it is spoken of as the object of these judgements, is

spoken of as a world having a Heaven, Earth, Sea, Rivers, Sun, &c. as parts of it, even as it was observed before in the destruction of the Heathen world in the sixth seal, *Chap. 6.* and of the Christian world, *Chap. 8.* Which observation is useful, 1. To help us to find out what thing in Popery, or, in that dominion, is meant by some analogie from *Earth, Sea, &c.* in the natural body and frame of the world, to such things made use of in that antichristian world, which, in that respect, are *Earth, Sea, &c.* to it. 2. It is usefull, to let us see what weight Religion and its change hath upon a people; it maketh it appear as another world, and therefore the special changes in all these three periods, are to be sought in the change that is on the outward frame and face of Religion. 3. It is useful for clearing one thing by another, as what was *Sea*, in the Christian world, will help to shew what supplieth that room in the antichristian, &c.

3. Observe that in these vials, respect is sundry times had in the expression of the effects to the plagues of *Egypt, Exod. 6. 7, 8.* yet so that as *Romish Babylon*, is spiritually called *Egypt* and *Sodom*, *Chap. 11.* So these effects, are not literally, but spiritually to be understood, at least, in a great part.

4. Take this consideration also, that as Antichrist had a double notion and consideration, *Chap. 13.* as Civil or Ecclesiastical: So these parts of him, Rivers, Sun, &c. and the effects on them, may have that twofold consideration, some of them on this temporal grandour bringing temporal plagues; some of them on his Ecclesiastick frame, by spiritual judgements overturning that: therefore is it that some of them are certainly spiritual, others literally *κατα το φανος*, to be understood, some of them have respect to both as we will see.

5. Observe, that in the order of the pouring forth of these vials, there is a special likeness and reference to that same order and method which was followed in the trumpets, *Chap. 8.* The first vial is on the earth, as the first trumpet, and so it is with the rest: but as the worlds are different, so are the effects. This letteth us see, First; that as we are to look on Antichrists fall by the vials, so we are to look to his rise under the trumpets; seing the Spirit holdeth forth in these two, 1. a suitableness and equality in Gods justice, bringing him down as he rose, 2. a spreading and counterfeiting nature in his errors, making a whole body, as it were, a world, in opposition to Christs world before. Secondly, it helpeth, by comparing the trumpets and vials together, to win at some clearness in the effects threatened. And, 3. that the ruine is as certain as the rise of the beast; and as the three last woes in the trumpets were greatest, so are the three last vials.

6. Consider the time to which these vials relate: and although it be not easie or possible to determine the distance of time between them, or the precise beginning of every one of them; yet may something be laid as certain for the rise and close of this vision in general, which in short we take to be that at



same of the seventh trumpets sounding, Chap. 11. after the begun change of Reformation, especially when Reformation and Religion came to be established by civil Authority, which will be about Anno 1560. as was then more fully cleared: this is after the beasts kingdom is discovered and a change and decay in his grandour begun. The pouring out of the seventh vial cleareth that the close is the consummating of Gods wrath, as their titles bear, Chap. 15. and vers. 2. and so endeth with time.

7. Concerning the instruments, called *Angels*, Observe, That though one Angel only be named to every one, yet it will not exclude moe Agents, but that God though he make use of men, Ministers or Magistrates (both having hand therein, Chap. 14. compared with 17.) yet He hath it over-ruled by Angels, that it be not disappointed, and that it should not fail.

8. Observe, That though there be order in the rise of these judgements, and all are not poured out together; yet, as in the seals and trumpets, so here it will not follow that the former judgement is ended, before another come, but that there is an order in rising: yet the first and second plague, which are the effects of the first two vials, they go alongst to the end, and have but these new plagues superadded to them.

To come nearer, there are two things in all these vials observable, 1. The object plagued, or that whereon the vial is poured; which is (as it were) the cause. 2. The effect following, to wit, the affecting or plaguing that object, whether that be primary or secondary; for, one plague may have sundry effects following upon or going alongst with one another. Concerning which take these rules, 1. That the object denoteth some special part of the antichristian frame or fabrick of his kingdom; complexly taken. The judgement is primarily there; the effect again reflecteth on the persons who are supporters of that kingdom, and affecteth them, as the Earth, Sea, Sun, Seat, &c. is still somewhat of that antichristian state, which, being affected, affecteth his worshippers, as the bringing down of a house, hazardeth these that are in it; or, somewhat wrong in a ship, these who sail in her.

2. That this thing plagued, or on which the vial is poured, cannot be any thing merely active in this judgement, as for instance, by the Sun, under the fourth vial, cannot be meant here the Scriptures, because they, as such, are not proper parts of the antichristian frame, but some other thing accounted Scripture as to them: Nor doth the affecting of Scriptures, by any violent handling of them, grieve them who are excessive in that: but it must be something that can suffer by these vials, the suffering whereof may have such suitable effects on the subjects of that kingdom as the rejecting of their traditions may probably grieve the abatters of them.

3. In application either of the things plagued, or of their effects to particulars, special respect would be had to these three or four things, 1. to the analogie between such a thing (suppose the earth) in the natural world, and what is called earth in this antichristian universe; that by the similitude of the one to the other, somewhat may be gathered. 2. What is applied, would suit well with the effect; for, one of them hath influence on the other, and a suitableness to the other, as such a cause may have upon such an effect. 3. That there be an agreeance and resemblance with these same things mentioned under the trumpets: the one (to wit, earth, here) being to this antichristian world in place of that

which was earth there to the Christian world. 4. Special respect would be had to the story of events; (so far as they are already fulfilled) for some length certainly they are fulfilled, that the application may agree with the series of the event, which otherwise cannot be sure.

To come particularly then to the first vial, according to these rules the object of that plague is the earth. 2. The effect is, *a grievous and noisome sore fell upon the men who had the beasts mark, and worshipped his image*. By the earth is understood that which is most firm (it is the most firm part of the universe, Psal. 104. the earth He established, &c.) and most essential and necessary for entertaining of life. By the earth of the antichristian world then, we understand such Doctrines as they lay for surest, and upon which all the rest stand, and without which that building cannot stand and be a world, such as it is, more than this world without the earth. Such is the Popes Supremacy, absolute to dispose of all things as he pleaseth (and others mentioned, Chap. 13. as characteristic to him) Hence did we expound the earth (Chap. 8. to be the fundamental Doctrines of the Christian Religion. The pouring the vial on this, is the discovering the unsoundness of such grounds, the rejecting and abhorring them in practice, and mens betaking themselves to more solid and better principles to walk by, especially when done by publicly authorized preaching.

The effects suit with this. 1. These plagued are such as are enslaved to the beast, and stood and fell with him in the largest extent of his tenets and Doctrines. 2. The plague it self is a *boyl and sore*, but such as is occasioned by the former discovery, alluding to the plague, (Exod. 9. 8. 11.) of boyls especially on the *Magicians*. Hereby is holden out a plague, 1. painful; 2. shameful and loathsome before others: by which may be understood that inward envie and fretting, and outward contempt and shame that fell on all Antichrists devoted slaves, when God brought to light the vanity, blasphemy, and hypocrisy of their devised Religion, and tyranny, whereby the world had long been deluded. They now come to be accounted as unsavory salt, and false Teachers, who once swayed all. In sum, this saith, that when the seventh Angel shall sound, and God shall begin His quarrel with the beast, He shall at the entry so discover and shake the prime foundations of that antichristian Kingdom, that it shall procure much inward fretting and vexing grief (compared to pricking in the reins, Psal. 73. 21.) to the prime supporters thereof, and shall make them loathsome and abominable to the world, as were the *Magicians* (opposers of Moses and of the peoples delivery from Egypt, and instrumental in hardening Pharaoh and the Egyptians) by the plague of boyls, Exod. 9. 11. so as they could not stand.

In the event, this is sure, 1. That the fundamentals of the Popish kingdom were stricken at, such as the Popes Supremacy and absoluteness, the opinion of indulgences, merits, soul-masses, Purgatory, &c. which two, Erasmus (merrily) said, were the two unpardonable faults of Luther, that he had meddled with the Popes crown and the Monks bellies, meaning that they would never digest it, to be touched in these, but it would gall them. 2. The contempt that followed upon that discovery, and the vexation, anxiety, terrour, trouble and grief that it put that Roman Clergie unto, the events and story of these times do sufficiently witness.

## LECTURE II.

Verf. 3. *And the second Angel poured out his vial upon the sea, and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.*

4. *And the third Angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters, and they became blood.*

5. *And I heard the Angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shall be, because thou hast judged thus.*

6. *For they have shed the blood of the Saints and Prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy.*

7. *And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgements.*

**T**He Angels proceed to execute Gods judgement on the beast, and the second poured out his vial on the sea, *vers. 3.* The effects are two, 1. *It became as the blood of a dead man.* The second is a consequence of this, *every living soul died in it.* There is in this certainly set forth a further degree of Antichrists ruine, as the second trumpet held forth a further step of his rising: in general, this extendeth the plague on Antichrist further, and bringeth it to an higher degree; But more particularly, (as we conceive) is holden out Gods plague upon the complex body of that Kingdom, as it is antichristian, that is, both sea and land, especially their Ordinances, Government, superstitious forms of Worship, Councils, Decrees, &c. whereby much of their grandour stood: now these are set upon, and the abbacies, traditions, indulgences, &c. whereby they subsisted, are in a great part destroyed.

That by *sea* here must be understood something of this nature, will appear by comparing *vers. 17.* and *13.* of *Chap. 18.* together: for, this *sea* must be suitable and serviceable to these who trade in it, and these again suitable to their trade, which is the souls of men amongst other things, *vers. 13. ibid.* and these certainly must be their Church-men, therefore this *sea* they trade in, must be their Ecclesiastick or Church constitutions, forms and ordinances of sacraments, ceremonies, masses, traditions, &c. and especially what concerneth indulgences, pardons and purgatory, because in these their trade of souls is especially driven: this answereth somewhat to the second trumpet also, *Chap. 8.*

Gods plague upon these, maketh them like the blood of a dead man, that is, (as *Chap. 8. vers. 8.* it became corrupt, and not only uselesse but deadly, so that whosoever would now follow that way and drink of these Doctrines, it would kill him. Which two effects hold out, 1. that, after Gods begun quarrelling with Antichrist, he mendeth his superstitious worship nothing, but maketh it worse, so did the Council of Trent in many Articles both of faith and worship. 2. That after Gods revealing and discovering the grossness of particular errors by the former vial, he went on and discovered the rottenness of the complex worship and Government of that Kingdom. 3. That by this discovery, especially their Church-men were pinched. 4. That this brought the antichristian state lower and made many forsake these rotten waters that they could not live in them, or if they stayed, they were now more deadly than before this discovery: So by *dying* here may be understood their dying as to Antichrists state; that is, ceasing

to be of his Kingdom as formerly, as *Chap. 8. 4.* so they die to him, or, they are more hardened that stay and become more spiritually dead. Thus this judgement either maketh them leave him, or it maketh their condition more desperate: so that now, none continuing to live under the full profession of Popery, can get heaven, as in the former darknesse, in some respect, it was possible: this by the Council of Trent and what followed upon it, we may conceive it to have its fulfilling; so that now men can no more live in Popery and own their tenents than fishes can do amongst blood; but every living soul that quitteth not these Ordinances, shall perish, partly, because now they are worse in themselves, partly, because the light having made the discovery, a separation is called for.

The third vial followeth, from *vers. 4.* to *vers. 8.* containing, three things, 1. The object plagued, it is the rivers and fountains. 2. The effect, they are turned to blood. 3. There is a double approbation of Gods Justice, or congratulation added, whereby some things may be gathered, useful for understanding this vial, which differeth not only in its object, but in its kind from the former. We may in this observe these three things; 1. That the object is *men*: not Ordinances or Government in the abstract, but such as shed blood and can drink blood, 2. What sort of men they are, to wit, guilty of the blood of the Saints. executioners of that whore who is drunk with the blood of Saints, *Chap. 17.* and in whose skirts it is found, *Chap. 18. 24.* 3. What sort of plague this is, *bloodshed*, literally so taken: so to drink blood, importeth they have shed blood, and are met in their own measure. There blood is shed, and that in abundance: and the just proportionableness betwixt their sin and judgement here, importeth this, especially if we consider that, (*Chap. 13. 9, 10.*) he that *killeth with the sword, must be killed by the sword*, which is the threatening, whereof this is the accomplishment. And in this vial and the former, there is an allusion to the plague of Egypt, when all was blood, and the fishes died.

The object of this vial, is, *fountains and rivers*, to wit, such things as furnish moisture and life to the antichristian world, as fountains and rivers do in this. They must be something running to the former sea, and in opposition to the truth of the Gospel, *Chap. 8.* yet so as it must be applied not of things, but of persons who have shed blood, and whose blood is shed. By this then, it would seem their orders and Clergy especially (and all others who are prime instruments and supporters of that antichristian world) with their Nurseries and Seminaries, whereby



whereby they have filled the world with corrupt Teachers, must be understood. These are called *wells* by *Pet. 2, Epist. 2.* (though without water, that is, refreshful water) These run to and suit with the sea of Ordinances formerly mentioned. These have furnished life to that beast of a long time, men drinking at no other fountain or river, but the Writings of some corrupt Schoolmen, whose principles and assertions are often more debated for than the Scriptures; and had it not been watered by these, that world had run dry long since. These mens Doctrines shall not only by this be vilipended, but the executors and followers of these principles (whereby many Saints have smarted) shall be repayed: for, persons eminently subservient to Antichrist, and malicious against the Saints, must be understood here, as their Ordinances were by the former.

The effect, is, *these rivers became blood*: not corrupt only (as in the former *vial*) but they became bloody, that is, had their own blood given them to drink, and were really made liable to such crosses and executions as formerly they had made the Saints liable unto; so the words after expound it, and so the Church in the second seal is described by a red horse. But lest Antichrists followers should glory in suffering as in Martyrdom, the congratulation is added, to shew that it was an effect of Justice on them: which is commended in a double congratulation and approbation.

*Vers. 5.* The first approbation, is by the Instrument of this plague, called the *Angel of the waters*, because this was committed to him to plague these rivers and fountains. There is here besides Gods title of eternity (or holiness, as the last word of the three, in the Original, *ὁ αἰώνιος*, hath it) a twofold commendation of Gods way in this, with the evidence of both, shewing that is done, and that distinctly upon grounds of knowledge (as men who speak of such things should do:) and there is one from the altar, subscribing to this judgement, which we take to be the same, *Chap. 14. 18.* whereby we understand that perfect harmony that is between them in heaven and these on earth, heaven and earth as it were, rejoicing together in the execution of this judgement, as it is *Chap. 18.*

The first congratulation, or approbation, goeth on two things, 1. Something in God is commended. 2. There is an evidence and proof of that which is commended.

1. That commended, is Gods eternity and unchangeableness, it is the same with His name *J E H O V A H*, these three syllabs making up this, *which art, and wast, and shall be*; and it especially relateth to Gods faithfulness, making out now His promises to His people; and this attribute being the same with *J E H O V A H*, is here observed as an evidence of Gods faithfulness when He is now known by that Name as He was to *Israel*, *Exod. 3.* and that other pitched upon, is Gods justice, not simply, but as proportioning suitable judgements to the party plagued. *Righteous art thou, O Lord*: that commended, is, the Righteousness and Justice of God; the ground of it, *because thou hast thus judged*, or judged these things, *ταυτα*: there is a special justice observed in respect of the object God hath poured this vial on, as being very guilty. 2. The suitability and equality of the judgement is commended, *They shed blood*, *vers. 6.* and thou hast given them a meeting by shedding their blood. They made all the Saints a prey and had such strict Laws against them, now Thou maketh them a prey, according to *vers. 7. Chap. 13.* by which we expound *this drinking of blood*, it being the fulfilling of that threatening evidently. In a word, they are worthy to be so dealt with, which not only looketh to the justice of the plague simply, but to its proportionableness to their sin especially (as was said) So it may well be rendered *Meet*, for they were meet not only for wrath, but for this same very wrath, as the people of God pray, *Psal. 137.* and it is commanded, *Rev. 18. 6.* it being Gods

justice to proportion as is meet, and therefore to give reward to His Servants the Prophets out of meetness, and not out of merit, *Chap. 11.* and so this word concludeth no more but God hath met these men that were prodigal of the Saints blood in their own measure, though unquestionably this and much more was deserved. It is written of *Cyrus*, who, thirsting still after more Kingdoms, was at last defeated by the *Masagete*, and having his head cut off, *Tomiris* the Queen did cast it in a vessel of blood, bidding him that never would be satiated, drink his fill; such a meaning hath the same phrase here.

The second congratulation, or approbation, is, *vers. 7.* and it is the subscription of the Saints glorified in heaven to this Song, setting their seal to the former approbation, *Even so, Lord God Almighty, &c.* observing, and as it were, preaching Gods Justice and Truth that appeareth now in these plagues. This looketh like the same, who (*Chap. 14. 18.*) put up their suit to God for this judgement, now when it is come he acknowledgeth it, so that as both the Church-militant and Triumphant longed and prayed for *Babylons* ruine: now when it cometh they are not idle spectators, but blesseth Him for it. They prayed then, they praise now: who do the former, shall have occasion of the latter, and should improve the occasion of praise as well as of prayer. If by the first be to be understood Christians active in the judgement, and by the second, some suffering yet under Antichrist, it will be one thing, all sorts shall thus bless God (even these that are but onlookers) though as yet they do not share of the delivery in that measure. In sum it is, Lord, all that is said of Thy judgement on thy enemies, and of Thy goodness to Thy people from the beginning of the world, and particularly, all that is come, or to come on Antichrist, is just and true, and there is no wrong done; thou hast kept Thy threatnings to him and Thy promises to Thy people.

If any ask, why this approbation, or these congratulations are marked at this vial especially? Beside what was said in opening the meaning of the words, we conceive these reasons may be given, 1. To shew that the work is observable, and should be observed as that which hath much of Gods glory shining in it; and so it telleth how observant Gods people are and ought to be in observing His judgements. 2. It is to shew the greatness and gloriousness of the work of executing judgement on Antichrist, as having much of Gods faithfulness and justice shining in it, and of His love to His Church. 3. It is, that thereby the stupidity and slowness of men may be checked. Men are slow to put out their hand against the whore: Therefore He would let them know how glorious a work it is, that they may be stirred to be active in it when they are called to it, and in the mean time may pray for it. 4. Because this was the special thing foretold in the 13. and prayed for in the 14. Chapters: and they that prayed for it formerly observe, and praise for it when it is fulfilled. Watchfulness in difficulties will send us to prayer, and so should outgates send us to praise.

Although we dare not be particular in the application of things, yet considering some remarkable overthrows of many Papists (whereby their own blood was given them to drink) in *Holland, France, Germany, England, &c.* in the prosecuting of their designs that were a little after the Council of *Trent*, and to the year, 1588. which formerly, when all things succeeded with them, they used not to meet with; and considering the Laws and Acts that were made against Seminary Priests and saying of Masse, &c. that it should be death, we conceive there is warrant to say, that in part this vial is fulfilled, and that there is, in that respect, ground for the praise that is mentioned here.

## LECTURE III.

Verf. 8. *And the fourth Angel poured out his vial upon the Sun, and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.*

9. *And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues : and they repented not, to give him glory.*

10. *And the fifth Angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast, and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain,*

11. *And blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.*

**A**ntichrists begun ruine goeth on as his rise did, and by the same degrees. The fourth Angel (*vers. 8.*) poureth out his vial, and a further degree of darkness cometh on that kingdom, and anxiety upon his followers. The object of this plague, is the *Sun* of Antichrists world, so that *men were scorched with fire*, that is the proper work of this Angel: his power is by that plague of affecting the Sun to scorch men, that is, the men mentioned, *v. 2.* that have the beasts mark: for they are *in* the plural, and as relative to these formerly mentioned. Then (*vers. 9.*) follow three effects of this plague, 1. pain, 2. blasphemy, 3. impenitency.

This plague is declared, 1. In the object of it, *the Sun*, 2. In the nature of it in general, *He had power given him to scorch men with fire.* 3. This is more particularly cleared in the effects, *vers. 9.*

The *Sun* of the beasts kingdom, or world, we understand with a twofold respect, 1. to his Temporal state. 2. to his Ecclesiastick. 1. By *Sun* in the world, is understood somewhat eminent, glorious and shining, so *Chap. 6.* as the heaven is above the earth. Now, as the Sun is chief among the lights in that firmament, so here must be understood some eminent chief light in that world, as great ones, Kings and Princes, are glorious lights. It would seem the Emperour, as chief among them who uphold most that whore, as her first born (so is he called) The King of *Spain* and others may be meant, it being the Sun that giveth light and also comfort and life to things here, as these temporal Monarchs do to the Pope, especially the Emperour and King of *Spain*; or, it may hold out the Lords withdrawing temporal powers from the beasts friendship, as it is *Chap. 17.* and seeing they glory much in that, the making of such to hate her, cannot but darken that kingdom and gall them much: and indeed as the Word propagateth and defendeth Christs Kingdom, so almost doth external force of inquisitions, and such like, uphold the Popish tyranny; and seeing these go before the fifth vial, wherein Babylon is to be pulled down by some Kings, this is not unlikely.

Looking again unto this beast as a whorish Church, by *Sun* we understand the complex doctrine, rules and canons of the Church of *Rome*, or, what is to them in place of the Scriptures, which we expounded to be that Sun in the fourth trumpet, *Chap. 8.* though this be not the Sun simply, yet to them it is so, and it is a Sun profitable to that kingdom, or heaven wherein it shineth, that we are to seek for here. This is done by Gods making the light of His Word to shine more clearly and convincingly to discover the prophecies about Antichrist, whereby his glory is stained, that darkness and ignorance which they formerly called light, is abolished now in a great measure;

and this cannot but burn and scorch these men, as very fire, when light cometh to an height, while as the very prophesying of two witnesses, *Chap. 11.* so tormented them: for, the outbreking of Gods light darkeneth their sun, as the rising of their errors darkened His Sun, *Chap. 8.* but not in the same manner. The effects will suit well with this also. Both, 1. the pain that *men were scorched*, that is, by this Word convinced and shamed, and by the Gospels thriving (which they could not impede) so fretted, as *Isa. 26. 11.* The fire of enemies is their envy, which as fire consumeth them. This is a further addition unto and degree of the first plague, *vers. 2.* both these applications may agree with the scope and type, &c.

The second effect, is, *They blasphemed God who had power over these plagues.* Where is, 1. Gods sovereignty in ordering all judgments, saying to one, go and he goeth, to another, do this and he doth it, *Mat. 8.* It is marked here to aggregate their sin, which is the second thing, that they should have slighted God and not humbled themselves before Him who smote them, *Isa. 9.* which was their duty, but grew in blaspheming God, that maketh their sin the greater. By this blasphemy we would understand a more violent giddy following of their blasphemous errors, and idolatrous ways, which they flee most unto in their straits, to wrong God more publicly: as their blasphemy was marked in their head, the beast, *Chap. 13.* thus light doth them no good, as the third effect cleareth; *They repented not to give God glory*: Where is holden out, 1. the use of a rod, repentance in taking with our sin and abandoning of it; 2. the way to remove a rod, repentance and not running on in sin; 3. a great use of repentance, or end of it, is, to give God glory when He smiteth. 1. This taketh with the justice of the stroke, *Josh. 7.* *My son* (saith he to *Achan*) *give God glory.* 2. It yeeldeth to Him as the greater, and will not contest, 3. It glorifieth Him in accepting the chastisement and in bringing forth fruits before others, as acknowledging its being overcome. Antichrists followers, even by Gods judgments on him, will not be brought to repentance, so mad are they on their idols and so drunk with his delusions.

This fourth vial is at most but in the pouring forth, and the fifth certainly is to come, (yet is more plainly described than any of the former) and so we are to walk the more warily in the opening of it, seeing events cannot afford such help.

In the fifth plague, which is in the 10, and 11. Verses, There is the object and the events. Here the object seemeth to be more clearly set down than formerly. It is *the throne or seat of the beast*: partly, to shew us it is something of the beasts Kingdom, that is plagued before, though it be no so plainly said the



the sum of the beast, as it is here the seat of the beast. 2. partly, because at this fifth vial pouring out, things will be so clear, that they will not be veiled with types; for, it bringeth a more sensible step of his ruine, as the fifth trumpet did of his rise. This fifth vial foretelleth the ruine of Rome, which will make Antichrist seek some other chair, or nest, to sit in. The object, is, *the seat of the beast*. The effects are four, not unsuitable to what went before; seeing there is a further plague on the beasts Kingdom, there is also a further degree of pain and bitterness amongst his followers.

The *seat* here, or throne, (as it is in the Original *ἑστῶς*) is the same which was (*Chap. 13. vers. 2.* spoken of the seat or throne of the Dragon, to wit, *Rome*. Rome was called the Dragons seat, or throne, because although his dominion and authority did extend far, yet there he especially kept his court, and from thence issued his commands. It is the most eminent part of his Kingdom, where his Majesty, as it were, doth more manifest it self. And as Rome was the Dragons throne, so will it be found to be Antichrists also: and therefore the object of this plague. 1. Because the beast (*Chap. 13.*) getteth the same throne which the Dragon had, and is to emit his bulls, mandates and orders from it, over all his dominions. 2. Because it agreeth well with the scope and gradation of these vials, which bring ever the judgement nearer Antichrist till it make him flee, as the vial following cleareth. 3. This is clear from the explicatory prophesie of this same vial, *Chap. 17. and 18.* where under the name of *Babylon*, the destruction of this seat is set down, as there will be clear. 4. It agreeth well also with the order of the trumpets: betwixt which and the vials there is a likeness in method, as is said. By the fifth trumpet, Antichrist cometh to his throne to get some publick footing; by the fifth vial he is put from it: and supposing the Popish Kingdom

to be the antichristian Kingdom, and the Pope to be Antichrist, there is no question but Rome is the throne, it being from the pretended infallibility and sanctity of that Sea that they derive their state, he is now put from it. The first four vials, as it were, took in the outwork, this fifth stormeth his castle and overturneth it, which is more largely described, *Chap. 18.*

There are four effects, 1. *His Kingdom was full of darkness*, when the splendor of his throne is destroyed, which they thought impossible: Now, there is confusion (by the influence of that stroke) on all his dominion: men think lesse of it, and it is now, as it were, fully darkened and contemptible in a greater degree than by any former vial: even as the fifth trumpet compleated the Churches darkness, which was but partial before it, yet is not this kingdom fully destroyed, though darkened, but there is a Pope, and he hath followers still and instruments and agents to do for him now when he is weak. The second effect, is, their pain, evidenced to be greater than before, in that they, like distracted mad men, *gnaw their tongues for pain*, it troubleth them so to be disappointed in the opinion they had of Romes standing. 2. The declining of their own grandour. And, 3. the enmity they had at the light they oppose, tormenteth them to see it thrive. These are more fully in the lamentation, *Chap. 18.* The third effect, *they blaspheme against the God of heaven, as Supra*: possibly breaking out now in open rage, as if he made not good his supposed promises to the Apostolick Sea, Christs Vicar and Mother Church. And therefore in this fury they run to any instrument for help, as under the sixth trumpet, like that blasphemous saying, *ſicſtere ſi nequeo ſuperos, Acheronta movebo*. Yet, 4. they amended nothing of their ill deeds that brought on that wrath. Repentance is difficile, especially to these in this delusion.

## LECTURE IV.

Verſ. 12. *And the sixth Angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.*

**T**His vial in its events being wholly to come, it is no marvel there be difficulty in the understanding of it, seeing what is not past is not easie; yet we have these two helps to understand it. 1. Concerning the time, this relateth to the state of the Church, succeeding Romes destruction: for as the first four vials begin and carry on his judgement, by discovering his hypocritical way and spreading the light of the Gospel, and by Armies and temporal judgements taking vengeance on his Protectors, and dividing some (at least) of the western Kings that once had given their power to him, from him to be turned to hate him, *Chap. 17.* so the fifth vial lighteth on his seat, and he is made to quit his inexpugnable throne, and to flee else-where for shelter.

This sixth vial holdeth forth God still pursuing him; and as that beast useth new endeavours to strengthen himself by leagues with new friends, so God stirreth up new enemies against him, the Jews are called, and God taketh vengeance on all his supporters, when he hath suffered them for a time to countenance that banished Antichrist, he and they are both taken and cast into the pit, so that as the fifth vial putteth him from Rome, that it is not thereafter his seat, though there be a Pope: This sixth putteth an end to Popes, that there is none after that, as *Chap. 19.* appeareth: and then the seventh vial bringeth an end to all Christs enemies universally, and especially upon any adherents or favourers that this beast shall have after that; for, it appeareth, that even when there shall be no visible Pope, yet some shall continue so drunk with his wine, as to be daring af-

ter him and lamenting his destruction, even to the end, who then shall be remembered when great Babylon shall get her last sentence.

A second help for clearing this, is, by comparing it with the 19. Chapter, which is the more clear and full explication of this: for, 1. that followeth the 18. Chapter which directly cleareth the fifth vial, and so in order the exposition of this sixth followeth, *Chap. 19.* 2. Here a gathering and battel is spoken of, but the event is not set down till *Chap. 19.* when the contrary party against this gathering is expressed, and that it is the same gathering, appeareth, that it is here *the day of God*, there, *the supper of the great King*, denoting one singular and eminent overthrow of Gods enemies. 3. also that the enemies destroyed there, are the same mentioned here, to wit, Kings and their Armies, the beast and false Prophet (who are mentioned under the same names in both places, to shew the reference of the one to the other) and therefore comparing the events with the 19. Chapter, it appeareth that the first four Verses contain a desirable event having an accession to the Church in it, answerable to which is the praise in the beginning of *Chap. 19.* the other expresseth a special designe of the beast, which God disappointeth, *Chap. 19.* last part. Who these Kings of the East are by which such an accession is made, and ground of joy given to the Church, will appear afterward.

In the words we have, 1. the object of this plague, *the great river Euphrates*. 2. The effects are more summarily and generally set down in two, 1. the effect; And, 2. the end or use of it, *vers.*

vers. 12. Then more particularly, from *vers. 13. to 17.* In a word, there are three notable events holden forth here, 1. the *Jews* conversion under that expression, *The preparing of the way of the Kings of the East*, 2. the diminishing of the *Turks* greatness, by *drying up Euphrates*. 3. the last expedition of the beast for support of his tottering Kingdom in the rest of the words, with its event, *Chap. 19.* This last expedition is either occasioned by the *Jews* conversion, who, taking him to be Antichrist, joyn with his opposers, whereby he is put to see for new friends. Or, these words may more fully explicate what by anticipation was set down before, namely, how this river of *Euphrates* was dried, to wit, Antichrist being put from *Rome* by the *Western Kings*, who now hate him, he hath recourse to the *Turk*, and possibly by alluring him from what prejudice he may suffer from the *Jews* rising and greatness, he getteth him engaged to concur with him, and many others also, on whom God taketh vengeance when they are gathered together, that what concerneth the *Jews* be not impeded.

The object, is the *great river Euphrates*: which is great; and because of that, it is often called (*ναρὶς ἑορῶν*) in Scripture the river simply. Of this *Euphrates* we heard, *chap. 9.* It runneth through *Mesopotamia* by or through *Babylon*, it divided *Solomons* Kingdom from *Syria*, and was a great strength to *Babylon*; and when the *Jews* were carried captive, they were carried beyond the river, that is, *Euphrates*; therefore it stands now in the way of their returning: this here is an impediment of their entry to the Church and of their access to help down with *Babylon*; and as once *Jordan* was dried to make way for them, so that impediment is to be removed (as if it were by the drying of a river) out of their way. To take *Euphrates* literally here, will not suit much with the Analogie used in the rest of the vials, nor with the scope here (that river standeth little in the way of the *Jews* conversion, and the drying of it will be little useful to the Church) it must then be figuratively understood. By *waters* ordinarily in Scripture are understood much people, and by *Euphrates* in particular, these people that dwelt about it, as *Isa. 8. 7.* the king of *Assyria* & his Army are called the waters of the river, that is, of *Euphrates*, because they dwelt about it. By the same reason then, *Euphrates* here must be understood the people for the time inhabiting there: and because not only in verity of the thing, the *Turks* now possess that part of the world, but also (*Chap. 9. 14. &c.* of this Book) these same people were marked as bound about that river; and the loosing of them, noted, as it were, the overflowing of that peoples Dominion like a flood from these parts. So there is no people that can be so reasonably understood here as the *Turks*, who were also understood there, *Chap. 9. 14.* And this sixth vial, mentioning that river, hath a special relation to the sixth trumpet, where it was mentioned before; for so the agreement betwixt the trumpets and the vials requireth. Beside, *Euphrates* was both the border of the *Roman Empire*, and also of *Dauids* Kingdom, though of, and within neither, but rather an impediment to both, so it would seem that no people within the Empire or Church are meant, though such enemies as border with both may be understood.

The effect, is, the waters thereof were dried up, that is, as their Dominion increased by their overflowing under the sixth trumpet, so now they decay and diminish, and their Empire is abridged, by what mean, the Lord knoweth: But these who before seemed a great river that none could passe, now people may crosse it, they are brought low; for, if overflowing signifie victory, as *Isa. 8. 7.* than drying up must signifie diminishing, as is said.

The second part of the event setteth forth the end of this, to wit, that the way of the Kings of the East might be prepared: where we are to enquire, 1. what these Kings are? 2. what this is, to prepare their way? 3. how the diminishing of the *Turkish* power

By these kings in the East, we understand the *Jews*, who, being converted unto the faith of Christ, are not only Kings, as all other Christians are, *Chap. 1. 7.* but it seemeth that especially they, when the Scripture speaketh of their conversion, are called Kings. If we will compare *vers. 21, 22, and 23 of Isa. 24.* we will find these things clear. 1. That when *Israel* is to be chastened, and thereafter restored, they are called Kings, *vers. 21.* for, it is they that are after many dayes visited, and that is the *Jews*; for no other people are capable of the comfort intended in the promise, (as *Calvin in locum* asserteth) for it supposeth them once to have been Gods people. And, 2. for a long time to have been forgotten; and what is added of Gods reigning in *Sion* before his ancients, confirmeth this also. 2. It is clear that that visitation seemeth to relate to their last calling; for it is after many dayes, while the whole face of their land is overrun. 2. The erecting again of Christs kingdom amongst them in so glorious a reigne, looketh to that time when it shall be most glorious, and so at their conversion, though in some part it may be fulfilled already under the Gospel (as all do grant) yet its higher degree of the *Jews* re-ingrafting followeth: and why may not that ancient priviledged people get names, importing a singular respect to them, especially considering that God may at their conversion furnish them generally with such spiritual and royal induements, that the feeble amongst them may be as *David*, and give also unto them a large outward Dominion? *Zech. 12.*

They are called Kings of the East, 1. because in respect of the part of the world we live in, who before them enjoy the Gospel; they are East to us, and so they are distinguished from the native *Western Kingdoms* and Kings, made also now to hate the whore. 2. Because many of them living there (it is like since the first captivity, and last dispersion) when they may be made to joyn against Antichrist in the West, (which maketh him so afraid) their expedition will look as coming from the East, and so the *Turks* will be in their way, as *Euphrates* was in *Cyrus* way, impeding the intaking of *Babylon*, till it was dried; so this of mystical *Babylon*. 3. Because possibly (if not probably) after the *Turks* destruction, God may give them great possessions and Dominions in the East, and make them much instrumental for spreading of the Gospel to other Kings in these parts; besides, ordinarily any rise of light to the Church and of Christs coming, is spoken as from the East, so *Cap. 7. 2.* and *Mat. 24.* it is like lightning, as it were, a new day or morning breaking up in the Church.

2. For the next thing, what this way of the *Jews* is? It seemeth to be one or all of these three, 1. It is to the Church. 2. to help down the Pope. 3. to their own possession. The *Turks* standing marreth all, and his removing will further all these.

To clear it, That their way may be prepared taketh in this general, the removing of any thing which may hinder them in their way towards the Church, or in the former expeditions: For, 1. not only are they to be looked on here as coming to the true Church, now separated from Antichrist; but, 2. as concurring to have a main hand in his overthrow. Hence he is so afraid at their conversion, (for it seemeth, that now all true converts are to be employed in ruining him) and he hath an Hebrew name *Abaddon*, to shew their abhorrency of him as others do, and the place of his ruine, and the praise for the same, is in Hebrew *Chap. 19.* pointing at a special hand which they are to have in his last overthrow. And in reference to these two ends of the *Jews* conversion, to wit, of joyning to the Church, and of going against Antichrist, there is to them a twofold let in their way (to forbear now their going to their own land) there is a great stumbling from the superstitious worship of Papists, who are called Christians, and a stumbling at the long prevailing of the enemy of Christians, the *Turk*, wondering, that if Christ be God, how He suffereth such blasphemy and blasphemers.



The first in a great part is removed by Gods judgement on the Pope, and Rome in the fifth vial. The second is to be removed now by this, that no stumbling or lett remain; for though they would do something, and possibly, now having the Pope discovered to them, their zeal is more hot against him than others, (because by his means they have been much hardened) yet the *Turk* becoming their enemy, and being engaged to that whores support, they are impeded while the Turkish Empire standeth. This vial removeth that impediment, his power is weakened, whether by themselves or by others, or by drawing of many to Christianity from him, we are not to determine, but access is given to them both to pull Antichrist down, and probably to win to their own possession by his ruine. And this leadeth to the third thing proposed, to wit, how the ruine of the *Turks*, or their weakning may be called the preparing of their way. Which is clear. 1. Whether we look to the *Jews* conversion, it strengthens them that Christ is God, and giveth them hopes of coming home: on which they lay great weight. Or, 2. whether we look to their undertaking against Antichrist. Or, 3. their return to their own land: all which three, as we said, seem to be pointed at here. The standing of the *Turk* obstructeth all, these three and the overturning of him, will strengthen all, and give them liberty without fear in the professing of Christ.

For further clearing of this, That these two events, to wit, the *Jews* conversion, and the *Turks* downfall, are prophesied of here, we shall confirm both severally from these reasons.

That the *Jews* conversion must be understood here, appeareth: for, 1. It is certain their conversion in the last dayes is spoken of and to be expected, and it can suit with no time better than of this sixth vial, which is after the Popes overthrow in respect of his seat at Rome, and before the seventh vial, which bringeth the end. Neither is it like that so great and concerning a business of the Church would be omitted in this prophesy; and it can be brought in no where so clearly, that of the *Jews* mentioned, chap. 7. being nothing to this purpose, as was said there. 2. The Prophets seem to foretell their restoring in these same terms, See, *Isa.* 11. 15. and 16. which Chapter speaketh of the dayes of the Gospel, and the *Jews* restoring, suiting with that time, as cannot be denied.

The expressions in sum are, that as God, when he brought them out of Egypt, dried up the sea and Jordan, so when he bringeth them from Assyria (which was beyond this *Euphrates* from Judea) he shall smite that river, and the removing of all impediments is set out under that expression. Neither is it for nought that drying of waters is a peculiar mercy shown to Israel in their first deliverances, and that allusion is made to that in their following restitution, to be a confirmation to their Faith therein, as *Isaiah* 44. 27. Thus saith the Lord that drieth up the rivers, and saith to the deep, be drie, &c. when yet no particular river was to be dried up, but thereby to mind them of what he had done.

3. If we look further to the explication of this, Chap. 19. there is much joy in the Church, praising God that he reigneth, and that in an eminent way, that his Wife hath made her self ready, and the marriage is come, &c. And can these agree so well to any event, as to the conversion of the *Jews*, which (*Rom.* 11.) shall be as a resurrection from the dead? Or, can the joy be so great, or the Marriage be made ready without them? especially considering if now they be not amongst Christs friends, when, in the words following, he is on his march against all his enemies; and could the Church of the *Gentiles* be merry if the *Jews* were amongst these enemies? But from Chap. 19. it is clear, that there is here a notable and singular accession to the Church; and what one can have, these effects so as this?

4. It is not unworthy the observing, that here so many Hebrew

expressions and phrases are used, and not so any where else; which seemeth to plead a special interest that the *Hebrews* have in the event of this vial. 1. The place is named in the Hebrew Tongue *Armageddon*: Why? *Hebrews* are there to put on that name, as their custom was to name places from events. 2. The praise is in Hebrew (*Chap.* 19.) *Aleluja*, used frequently in the *Psalms*, and not mentioned in any other song in this Book though they be frequent, because there was no considerable Hebrew praisers before this: These brought in, are called the *Lambs wife*, as in a Covenant relation, even before she be made ready; which agreeth to none, but to that ancient married people, unto which Covenant God hath respect, even in their last calling.

If it be asked, What we understand by their restoration, or conversion, Is merely a calling to the faith of Christ, where ever they shall dwell dispersed up and down amongst other people, or, with it, a restoring of them to their former laud and inheritance to serve God there, not in a typical or ceremonial way, but as an eminent, Gospel National Church? Albeit we cannot take on us peremptorily to determine, we say, 1. That although the first be true, yet dare we not say that it is merely and only to the faith of Christ, so as to exclude the other of possessing them in their own land, and that not only for the respect we have to the most able Commentators on this Scripture, and others of the Prophets, but for the reasons especially which may be alleged for it, which we draw to three heads: the first are the Scriptures and promises, speaking to the restoring not only of *Judah*, but also of *Israel* to return to serve God in their own land in one, *Ezek.* 37. 20, 21, &c. of Gods promising to bless it to them after its long barrenness and their being ejected out of it, *Psal.* 67. 7. See *Jer.* 3. 18. *Ezek.* 34. 13. and 36. 24. and 37. 14. and 39. 28. which places, as to *Israel* and their return with *Judah*, cannot be said to be fulfilled *Isa.* 11. 12. from ver. 10. That place (*Amos* 9. vers. 11, 12, 14, 15.) seemeth convincing to this purpose, as belonging to them in the dayes of the Gospel, and yet cannot be said to be fulfilled, especially in respect of what is in the last v. And certainly some words of Christs, *Mat.* 23. *Luk.* 21. 24. limiting their outward desolation and the desolation of their houses and land to the time they should say, *Hosanna* to him and acknowledge Him, and to the time of the fulness of the *Gentiles*, do also speak for this. Add to them *Paul*, speaking of their restitution, as to a National state, and of all *Israel* to be grafted in, as they were broken off, which cannot be so well without an outward National civil State, which confirmeth the former, *Rom.* 11.

A second sort of proof is, the reasons that plead for this; and in effect what reasons do plead for the *Jews* conversion, do in some degree plead for a temporal restitution, as, 1. Gods electing them to be his people, and making an everlasting Covenant with them, the promise of their dwelling for ever in that land, which peculiarly was given to that race (in a more special manner and by more singular rights and titles than any other in the world) are comprehended in that Covenant: and if any say, that that is not a saving promise or absolute, so neither was his promise of continuing them a visible Church, or His people, absolute, as the events of both alike do clear; yet is weight laid on his Covenant with their fathers, thus far as to make them again his people, and why not in this particular also? for it is not simply that he Covenanted with them in a Covenant of Grace (for, so he hath done with many others) but in a Covenant with special promises and grounds that maketh it a singular tie in these things, beyond what others have; See *Rom.* 11. 28. Considering especially, that so Gods glory will the more shine in his faithfulness and goodness in the remembrance of his people and Covenant: that work will be the more observable to all Nations, and their incoming, which is a special evidence of Gods faithfulness, and a great promise made to the

the Church, will certainly bring forth the ends of it more observably thus, both as they relate to God and His honour, the Churches splendour and others edification, or their own consolation, Neither can that promise made to *Israel* (*Deut. 30. 2, 3, 4, &c.* that when ever they should repent, the Lord would gather them from the Nations whether they were scattered, and return them to their own land) be thought void and null after Christs coming, especially considering the general repentance and mourning, which is to accompany their conversion. Therefore it would seem by that promise they may expect their own land, it being a part of Gods engagement to the natural seed of *Abraham*.

A third sort of proof, is, the concurrence of Gods Providence hitherto seeming to confirm this, for, beside that they are still, where they live a distinct people by themselves unmixed with other races (which seemeth to hold forth Gods will, that they should be so, and if they were converted, so as to live among other Christians, they might ingrosse, in that Nation they live amongst and the name of that Nation vanish) but that keepeth what befalleth them remarkable: as also, that although they be generally very rich, and so in capacity to go in some expedition, yet, as it is reported, few or none of them are possessors of lands any where, to be a retardment unto them. Considering also, that God hath reserved that Land unpossessed by any Christian, but such men as he mindeth to destroy, and to void it for them: and considering also that the conversion of the *Jews* and the destruction of these that possess now their Land, are trysted together at one time, Can any think that for nought? or, now when the *Turks* shall be expelled in this general battel at *Armageddon*, and that Land left void, and the *Jews* new converted, having hand in their overthrow. Will any offer to come between them and that possession? especially, considering that at such a time there will be (probably) a general zeal more than ordinary for the Churches propagation, rather than for particular dominion: certainly their title to that Land, will appear more sacred than what any other people can claim to any Land or it, and who will impede it? and it is observable that who ever possess that Land, it is still in Scripture accounted as belonging to the *Jews*, and will that right be to no purpose? 2. We say to that question, whatever may be doubted of their restoring to their Land, yet that they shall be brought to a visible Church-state. 1. Not only in particular persons here and there in Congregations; but that multitudes; yea, the whole body of them, shall be brought, in a common way with the *Gentiles*, to profess Christ, which cannot be denied, as *Rom. 11.* is clear, and that will be enough to satisfie us in this Text, though indeed this will stand also well with the former, and some way infer it.

The other thing to be cleared, was, that the *Turks* overthrow one way or other is meant by drying up that river *Euphrates*: which, beside what is said, is confirmed, 1. from the end wherefore it is dried up, to wit, the *Jews* restoring: and however we take their restoring (as is said) nothing more hindereth it than the *Turks* standing, (the Pope being now down) especially if the restoring them to their own Land be understood: that cannot be without this preceeding furtherance and the removing of this impediment out of their way. 2. The fulnesse of the *Gentiles* goeth alongst with, if it do not preceed, the *Jews* calling, and can that fulnesse be and the *Turks* possess so many Nations, where the *Gentiles* had Churches, and where there is so much joy in the Church, *Chap. 19.* and so much wrath generally on Christs enemies in the end thereof? It cannot be thought that either of these can be, and the *Turks* be free. 3. It followeth nativly by comparing the order and method of the vials with the trumpets. This is clear in all, That what plague cometh on the Church by the trumpets, the contrary good cometh by the vials, and what advan-

tage Antichrist got by the one, he losseth by the other. Now, it is certain, that as by the fifth trumpet Antichrist rose, and these *Turks* (before bound at *Euphrates*) were loosed by the sixth, as a plague following Antichrist on the Christian world; So by the fifth vial, Antichrist is put from his seat: and therefore in order by the sixth the Church should be next freed of that enemy, which Antichrists rise to the throne brought on: especially considering that the expressions are so like other; in the sixth trumpet, they are loosed as if *Euphrates* were overflowing all banks: here again: by the sixth vial, that overflowing is restrained and dried, which must be a drying up suitable and apposite to that loosing: which was before in the sixth trumpet. Beside, there is no other application probable; for to apply this to *Cyrus* his taking of *Babylon*, as if he had been a King from the East, his coming from the North will not suffer it, *Jer. 50. 41, 42, 43.* Or, to call these *Easterly*, heathen Nations, or *Turks* to be made use of to destroy Antichrist, cannot be: for these vials are poured out by some from the Temple, and Kings that formerly whored with the whore will have a main hand in her overthrow, *Chap. 17.* Or, to apply it to the weakning the Popes revenues, which as a River strengtheneth him, no question, he being formerly put from his throne, and these Kings turned to hate him, his coffers will be empty before this sixth vial come: Neither do these prepare so the *Jews* way, nor speaketh it formally such accession to the Church as the other, which is clear to be understood here from *Chap. 19.*

There are two chief Objections to be removed; The first is, That these vials bring wrath on the beast, as the effects of them, and he is the object they pour their plagues upon; but neither the in-coming of the *Jews* nor down-bringing of the *Turks*, toucheth him or affecteth him. *Ans.* 1. Though the beast be the chief object, yet not the only object, especially in these last two vials; all other enemies, Kings of the earth and Nations are also plagued, as is clear, comparing what followeth with *Chap. 19.* 2. In all these vials, two things are joyned together, the standing and spreading of Christs Kingdom and the decreasing of Antichrists: and these two proceed together; what bringeth Antichrist down, advanceth Christs Kingdom; and what advanceth His Kingdom, darkneth Antichrists; and though directly it strike not on Antichrist, yet consequently it doth; for, all Christs followers are Antichrists enemies. 3. It is not simply the Jewish Nation their conversion, and the *Turks* overthrow, that are spoken of here, but it is the *Jews* conversion and union with the *Gentiles* in pursuing Antichrist now discovered (and therefore first here called the false prophet) and the *Turks* now apparently as united with Antichrist (it being like, that he is among the chief of the Nations or Kings of the earth which he addresseth unto) and so both the *Jews* conversion and *Turks* ruine, will be of great concernment and a heavy stroke to the Pope.

*Obj.* 2. Can such a great accession stand with that, *Chap. 15.* that none would enter the Temple till these plagues were ended? *Ans.* 1. It cannot be meant, that no growth should be of the Church from the beginning of the vials; till all were closed: for then there should never any be, for they close the last judgement, and yet every vial hath a new accession to the Church and some victory over Antichrist. 2. The meaning of that place then, is, 1. none were able to stand to interceed for these who were to be plagued, but necessarily and inevitably they were poured out, and no intercession was admitted. 2. None entered of these creatures devoted to Antichrist and his destruction, they continued hardened to the last, even after *Rome* is destroyed and the Popes abolished, yet some rem.inder there is to the very last vial. All which should stir us up heartily to pray for these things that sometimes will be so good news to the Church, that in due time the Lord would perform it & hasten it. So far may we be warranted from this place.



## LECTURE V.

Verf. 13. *And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.*

14. *For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battel of that great day of God Almighty.*

15. *Behold, I come as a thief, Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.*

16. *And he gathered them together into a place, called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon.*

**F**rom ver. 13. to ver. 17. followeth the third effect of this vial, to wit, the last great expedition of Antichrist for his support, now after *Romes* fall (or at least the shaking of that dominion hugely) and before his ruine. It may either be called a third effect following on, or occasioned by the former two; To wit, the first appearance of the *Jews* enmity against him and the *Turks* decay; Or, these verses may more fully explicate the manner how *Euphrates* (that is the *Turks* dominion) was dried up to prepare the *Jews* way, it was by the beasts engaging them for him, who then by the battel of *Armageddon* were ruined both together, and an excellent state of the Church, both of the fulness of the *Gentiles* and in-calling of the *Jews*, followed: whereupon these praises (Chap. 19.) are by anticipation set down before the battel: however the effects are the same.

This expedition in this Chapter, (beside the event of it, Chap. 19.) is set out in five things. 1. In its authors, the Dragon, Beast, and false Prophet. 2. Its special agents, three spirits. 3. Their task, to gather the Kings of the earth. And, 4. the success, they are brought together in *Armageddon*, ver. 16. and before this, after the preparation in parenthesis, there is cast in a word both of warning and of comfort. *Behold I come as a thief, Blessed is he, &c. ver. 15.*

1. The Author is designed by three names, yet is the same party under diverse considerations. The Dragon is the same mentioned, Chap. 12. 8, 9. to wit, the devil, here acting not immediately, but for supporting his lieutenant the beast, to whom he gave his power, Chap. 13. leaving nothing that hell can do for that end. The *beast*, is the first beast, named, Chap. 13. to wit, the Pope, as he is head to the civil State of *Rome*. The *false prophet*, is the two horned beast, Chap. 13. 11. for (Chap. 19. 20.) the false prophet worketh miracles before the first beast, which is the very work of that two horned beast, Chap. 13. and his place only. He is called here the *false prophet*, because that vizorn of respect to the Lamb, which formerly he pretended is now taken away, and he that pretended to be Christs Vicar, is now discovered to be the great deceiver and false prophet which was to come: and as these two beasts are one, Chap. 13. (as was there cleared) so is the beast and false prophet one here: for, Chap. 19. ver. 19. the beast is distinct from the Kings of the earth; so, ver. 14. of this Chapter, yet it would seem that all civil powers under the name of Kings (as Chap. 17) are contradistinguished from the beast and whore, as they that shall once support her and afterward hate her; neither can the Emperour be secluded from that reckoning: and therefore it is no supream Civil power. 2. They are both cast into the lake together, ver. 20. and the now-Roman Empire (likely) was either destroyed or turned from the Pope to hate him under the fourth and fifth vial. 3. They both end together, and it will be hard to think that there will be no succession of Emperours or civil states, representing these parts or powers after

the Popes overthrow: yet are they all three named distinctly, to shew what concurrereth for supporting Papacy, devilish subtilty, temporal power and deep hypocrisie. In a word, all unlawful and carnal shifts, and that both civil & ecclesiastick are made use of.

2. These inferior agents are several ways described. 1. In their nature, they are *spirits*: not properly, for spirits, as such, cannot be seen, neither is it such that can treat with Kings and perswade them to war, as sent out of the mouth of the beast and false prophet. But *spirits*, 1. for their activity and nimbleness in compassing their designs, 2. Because they call themselves spiritual men, in opposition to *Laicks*, such as the Popes Negotiators are, as *Nuncios*, *Legats*, *Jesuits*, &c. are exceeding meetly taken in here; for, their insitulation, Oath, and way of proceeding, answereth wel to that of these frogs, as singularly commissioned to spread themselves through the world to engage all Kings against Christ followers, who may also have lying spirits waiting on them to make their embassage effectual, as *Abah's* false prophets had, 1 *Kin.* 22. to which this may allude.

2. They are described by their qualities, they are *unclean spirits like frogs*. 1. In their rise, not of God, but the devil (for they are called so, ver. 14.) as all their orders are not of Christs planting, therefore compared to locusts, Chap. 9. 2. In their ends, devilish, opposit to the Lord Christ, as the devil is. 3. In their manner of proceeding, by all means devilish instruments, &c. as murders, treasons, lies, equivocations, &c. they care not what, if they may effectuate their designs for supporting the beast. 4. In their life, filthy and loathsome, like frogs that use marishes (which in Reformation are not cleansed, *Eze.* 47. 11.) so that brood continue in these places, which remaineth unhealed and haunteth such company. 5. In their number, they are *three*, that is, a considerable number. In the 11. Chap. when Christs cause was low, he had but two witnesses, Antichrist hath three, as it were, moe do back him to his last than Christ had, so renacions and constant are men in evil rather than good. *Three* also, to suit with the nature of him that commissionereth them. So some act devilishly and subtilly, as from the Dragon representing him; Others by might and civil negotiations carrying the business, as servants to Princes. A third sort, counterfeit Religion, either by pretending many miracles to have been done by their party or strengthened by the devil to do great wonders themselves for covering their hypocrisie, and strengthening their cause: and according to this threefold commission they act. 3. This design of the beasts by these agents, is more particularly holden forth in four things.

1. To whom they are sent, to the *kings of the earth, and of the whole world*, that is, to all Nations and Powers whether Christian or heathen that would joyn against the true Church. Therefore if the Emperour were one of the Popes followers, the commission must be sent to him, and he not be a sender; but as the naming of the Dragon distinctly supponeth no distinct visible power, so neither doth it in the other; likewise by the

the Dragon cannot be meant heathen persecutors, for they are sent out by the beast also, and do not send, but it is the beast now appearing both like a Dragon and a false Prophet. 2. Their errand is, to gather them to the battel of that great day of God Almighty, that is, to an eminent appearing of Gods, in taking vengeance on them: not that this is their intention to fight against God, as it is expounded, Chap. 19. or to meet his vengeance, but that in Gods providence this is made the result of all: and though they think its fighting for Christs Vicar, yet he expoundeth it otherwise, as it is, upon the matter, a fighting against God Almighty: for it was to oppose his Churches rising; and in that battel God was partie. 3. The Instruments are more clearly designed *spirits*, not of God but of the devil, suiting well with such a commission. 4. The means how they prevail, it is by working miracles, such as the devil, by his natural and experimental knowledge of things, and special dexterity to do and compass things, can out of natural causes easily and really bring forth, which may be wonderful to men who can act nothing like these: or, by his deceit, making men believe he doth things of themselves beyond the power of nature, which he doth not really perform, but deludeth men to believe that they are performed: such are the beasts miracles, Chap. 13. 12. Or, by making men believe that all their legends of counterfeit miracles are true, which they make a mark of the true Church, and thus perswade men to support their Babylon.

Before he set down the success of this negotiation, which is ver. 16. he casteth in (ver. 15.) a word of warning and comfort. It should be in parenthesis, as if the Lord Christ said, such ill dayes and great temptations to draw folks in snares are coming, that many will go on in these designs as thinking all their own: The advertisement is, *Behold I come as a thief*: when they think least on it, and see the least appearance of it, I am at hand to take vengeance on them, and to deliver the Church; so he speaketh, Mat. 24. 43. 44. 2 Pet. 3. 10. 2. There is insinuated a duty suitable to this advertisement that is, to watch and keep their garments clean, which was expounded, Chap. 3. 3. Implying, 1. a strait and difficulty; 2. the only mean of being preserved in a strait time, that is, watching, seeing by it only men are kept free of spots in their profession and Christian walk. 3. There is set down here two excellent motives pressing this necessary duty of watching, 1. from their happiness who doth so, they are blessed, 1. In themselves, being kept from much sin and wrath which others fall under. 2. In reference to others, who being by that design of Antichrists ensnared, shall share of wrath. The second is, because by watching, men keep their nakedness covered, which by sinning is discovered to their shame: a spotted garment hideth not this shame, but manifesteth it. To be kept from sin, is a great motive, and to keep from sin keepeth from shame; for, shame followeth ever upon sin. And there is a *behold* prefixed, yet Readers may not pass it, but observe the warning for their instruction in duty, and the encouragement of blessedness for their upstirring and comfort. Gods people would never look for a constant peace in the greatest growth of Religion, even at the Jews in-coming, the Church hath one of her forest battels. There is great odds betwixt a thriving Gospel and the real advantage that cometh by it, and outward peace and prosperity.

The last thing, is the success these fowl spirits had. They gathered these Kings who for many years despised the Gospel, and never had been gathered by it. In Gods judgement they are given up to yield to them. This hath these circumstances, 1. The success, *They are gathered*: and who? It is these to whom they were sent, both Popish Kings and Heathen Kings: It is like, the *Turks* as nearest, are most easily engaged to set on Christians; In a word such special enemies as God mindeth

to be about with. 2. It is said, *be gathered them*, not the *spirits* that is, either the beast who commissioned them, or rather God, who in his secret providence ordereth that designe of the beasts and the enmity of these kings for such an end as might glorifie him, and undo them. It is like an allusion to the commission Saran getteth against Ahab in perswading him, wherein though the devil be instrumental by false prophets in bringing Ahab to Ramoth, 1 King. 22. yet it is by Gods permissive providence to punish Ahab, that maketh him prevail. So it is here, the devil hath one design, the beast another, God a third, and he maketh use of both for furthering of his; he doth it when they seem to get most way in theirs, and its but the effectuating of his; so Gods hand is sovereign, even in Antichrists designs. 3. Concerning the place unto which they are gathered, two things are to be enquired, 1. What this Armageddon is? 2. Why it is expressly said in the Hebrew Tongue?

1. Armageddon is not to be taken literally, as if there were such a place, in which indeed bearing that name, that battel is to be fought in, but figuratively, it setteth down before hand, from the effect and event of that expedition and battel, after the manner of the Hebrews, who called places from notable events in them, as Bochim, Achor, Hamon, Gog, Ezek. 39. Bethel, with many others. Now, this is two ways applicable, 1. *Gharim*, which *Arma* cometh from, signifying subtilty and applied to the Serpent, Gen. 3. 1. yea subtilty with deceitfulness. 2. *Geddon* cometh from a root that signifieth gathered together, so the word signifieth deceitfully gathered together by craft; or the first root may signifie destruction, so it is gathered to be destroyed. The second way how it is applicable, is, to take it in allusion to *Megiddo*; so it will be the hill of *Megiddo*, a place in Judah, famous for two events, 1. (Judg. 5. 19.) in overthrowing Siseras mighty Army by a womans help, so these enemies brought into such a fit place, shall be as Sisera at the river Kison, Psal. 83. The other at *Megiddo*, by Josias death is lamentable. Thus it relateth to the great zeal and repentance which shall be among the Jews at such a joyfull event, Zech. 12. 12. both, or either, will suit here, what ever way it be. But take it from the force of the compound word, it agreeth best to the Hebrews way, and that is the reason why especially it is mentioned here expressly in the Hebrew tongue, implying, 1. That they put that name on it; for it is not like that other Nations would give it a name in a strange tongue. 2. Their respecting the event in the name, as is their manner, as before was said; thus the name speaketh out the event.

If it be asked, why the Lord delayeth so these vials, or carrieth them so on as the Pope getteth such help, and bringeth Gods Church low, even when he is near to ruine? Answer, 1. This way trieth the faith and patience of Gods people most, as, *here is their faith and patience* (Chap. 13.) importeth. So was Israel tried in their slow delivery out of Egypt. 2. This effecteth his end amongst enemies more, and giveth them occasion of kything, and in Gods judgement hardeneth them, by hopes sometimes to prevail, till his wrath come on them. So was Pharaoh, by Israels straits at the red sea, and the Magicians counterfeit miracles, hardened: thus Christs coming, is as a snare; Luk. 21. 35. 3. It contributeth more for Gods glory, he getteth them thus together to the great battel; he hath by this means many victories, and much glory over one enemy, as he had over Pharaoh, otherwise they would never uphold a contest with God. The Lord in this doth (as one faith) as a man; who, being to leap far, goeth a little back to come up with the greater force.

For sinful causes of it, we may name, 1. their ingratitude and unanswerable walk who receive the Gospel, which will make God remove it, and therefore also not to propagate



it. 2. Little pry on them that lyeth under Antichrist, and an d little prayer for Gods hastening His judgements on him and fitting of instruments for it. 3. Little singleness in any undertaking for that end, few Kings mindeth it: self-interest sway all, and others carnally seek their own glory in being instrumental in such a thing; or, under such a pretext, pursue

their own more than Christs, therefore they are not blessed. 4. Want of a powerful Ministry, and lives answerable amongst Professors, which maketh this Truth to be loathed, seeing so many are carnal, deceitful, &c. who professe it. Thus many have a sinful accession to Antichrists standing,

## LECTURE VI.

Ver. 17. *And the seventh Angel poured out his vial into the air, and there came a great voice out of the Temple of heaven from the Throne, saying, It is done.*

18. *And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings: and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great.*

19. *And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.*

20. *And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.*

21. *And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.*

**T**his is the last vial: for understanding whereof, It will be necessary to enquire, whether It bringeth the last judgement only on the beast? Or, If it looketh to the last plagues on the world simply, including in it the last judgement; Which last, being of largest extent, and including the former, we conceive to be understood, not only because of the series of this Prophecie, which being divided into three principal, typical prophecies of sevens (whereof this of vials is the last) and and other explicatory prophecies or visions, both which go a longst from *Johu's* time to the end: and therefore this vial, being the last step and close of the typical prophecies according to that series, it must extend it self to the end, which afterward is more fully explained, Chap. 20. 21, &c. as the two former vials are, Chap. 17. 18, 19. Beside this, these reasons evince it, First, Chap. 15. 1, 2.) they are the last plagues in which are fulfilled Gods wrath, and that simply in the world: for here, the Cities of the Nations are destroyed as well as *Babylon*, and these plagues are to be understood the last, with reference to such plagues as went before them under the seals and trumpets, which are first and second plagues, and these are extended even to the Heathen world: Therefore so must also the vials be, and not be abstracted to the beasts kingdom only. Secondly, The seventh trumpet bringeth the last wo, which (Chap. 10. 6, 7.) finisheth the myserie of God when time shall be no more; but it is cleared, (Chap. 11.) that the last wo and the last plagues are one: Therefore the day of Judgement must be the period of these vials, seeing it is the period of the third wo. 3. The expressions of this vial are such as bear it out, *It is done; a great earthquake, mountains were not found, &c.* which shew another manner of change than was under the seals, as the particulars will clear. Only take these two cautions 1. Not to think it bringeth the last judgement immediately, as if it contained no preceeding events, but only that the plagues immediately preceeding that judgement, are set out in this vial, and that there are no succeeding judgements on the earth after it, but it terminateth and endeth in eternity, and Gods final immediate inflicting judgement

on the world of the wicked. 2. That we look not on this, or the other vials, as fully or principally holding forth the condition of the Church in that time, but consequently; for they hold forth wrath on enemies: from which may be gathered, If it be ill with enemies, it is good and well with her; but that is more fully to be sought and gathered from the explicatory visions respectively contemporary with these, in which the flourishing state of the Church, and the successive inflicting of these plagues on her enemies, is more fully expressed.

In this vial we are to consider, 1. the object. 2. the effects. The object, is, *vers. 17. He poured it out into the air:* which object is of a larger extent than any of the former, and cometh nearer Satans kingdom in the foundation and extent of it, who is, (*Eph. 2.*) *prince of the power of the air:* the earth, sea, sun, and seat of the beast, are destroyed before this is poured out into the air, as that which was only resting, and comprehendeth what yet standeth of Satans kingdom, for the air to be plagued, hath influence on all under it, especially these who breath in it, and leaveth nothing breathing, and so no living in Satans world, yet a power he hath in it so long as it standeth. That thus it is to be extended, appeareth, 1. by the effects which are on the great City, *i. e.* what of it remained, and on all the Cities of the Nations, Islands, Mountains, and men that are smitten with it. 2. by comparing *vers. 10. Chap. 20.* with this event, it is on the devil and his kingdom, *Gog and Magog* universally: for, two of the three grand enemies, that engaged against Christ under the former vial, to wit, the beast and false prophet, are destroyed, Chap. 19. and casten into the lake. The third, to wit, the devil, hath some essay by other instruments after these are gone, Chap. 20. 10. He, by this last vial is cast into the lake where the former two are before him. And his last instruments, *Gog and Magog*, are more immediately destroyed from heaven, as the effect of this vial afterwards cleareth. This then taketh in what dominion yet Satan had in the world, and is to overturn it where ever it were, and amongst whomsoever.

The effects of this vial are three wayes set out, 1. by word, 2. by sign. 3. by real effects and consequents, all speaking the greatness of this judgement.

1. The word, *ver. 17.* 1. generally, is a great voice to make it observable. 2. Whence it cometh, *from the throne out of the Temple of heaven*, in a word, from God, to shew the authority of the speaker, and the certainty of the thing spoken, which is the third thing the expression it self beareth. It is done; it is like alluding to Christs word on the Cross, *it is finished*, when that work was at a close; so here there is an end of Gods plagues on the earth; and what he had sworn (*Chap. 10.*) concerning the finishing of the mystrie, was now perfected, and what was before prophesied of the end, now they are fulfilled: which words suppose not an immediat, instantaneous fulfilling of these effects, but successive, so as by that vial in due time and order they are brought about and closed.

2. The effect is set out by signe, *ver. 18.* And there were voices, thunders, and lightnings, which as we heard (*Chap. 11. 19.*) do signifie great and dreadful changes and judgements, and it may here include, with the last judgement, these commotions of Gog and Magog which do next preceed. 3. It is set out by the real effects and their consequents, as means by which these judgements are produced. They are of two sorts, First, a great earthquake, *ver. 18.* and a great hail *ver. 21.* These are not to be limited only to the very same plagues; but hold out, 1. a concurrence of heaven and earth for inflicting that judgement, as it was in the deluge, the earth shaketh from beneath, and the heavens throw down stones from above. 2. It holdeth forth the dreadfulnes and greatness of the judgement of this vial. 3. The immediateness of it, without any instruments intervening, he executeth it on them himself, as in earthquakes and hail; so (*Chap. 20. 9.*) it is said to be by fire from heaven, which is, upon the matter, the same. This earthquake (*ver. 18.*) is described in its degree, then in its consequents or effects. 1. A great one such as never was, far beyond that, *Chap. 6.* And indeed the last judgement will shake the world beyond any thing that ever it felt before. Secondly, The effects of this earthquake are marked to be three or four, 1. The great city, to wit, Sodom, *Chap. 11.* where the witnesses were killed, or Babylon, was divided in three, that is, overturned: for a city to be divided in three parts by an earthquake making the gapes of the earth that great and wide, and to be overturned, is one. Beside, in plain words, it is spoken afterwards of the cities of the Nations, that they fell, which expoundeth the former. Thus what reliques of Popery or Pa-

pists in any part of the world, whether at Rome, if possibly somewhat recovered, or any where else (yet without their Pope) shall now wholly be overturned. The second effect is on the heathens, called cities of the Nations, and contradistinguished from this one great city, They fell; all these shall be ruined also. 3. Babels judgement is enlarged and aggregated, that it relecth not in a temporal overturning, but God putteth in her hand the cup of the fierceness of his wrath, spoken of and threatned to all her followers, *Chap. 14. 10.* Whereby it appeareth, 1. That this judgement endeth in eternity: And, 2. that it respecteth former threatnings.

A fourth effect, is, *ver. 20.* shewing what influence this vial or earthquake shall have, not only on Cities, but on Islands at a distance, and mountains. In a word, on all the universe, which shall not only be moved as at other earthquakes, and *ver. 12. Chap. 6.* but here, they shall flee away and shall not be found, holding out thereby the consummation that shall be at the end, further expounded, *Chap. 20. 21.*

The second effect of the hail (*ver. 21.*) is to the same purpose to shew that then sinners shall have refuge neither from earth nor heaven: the hail is terrible, alluding to that plague, *Exod. 9.* but exceedingly beyond it, never such an hail heard of as this, every stone a talent weight; it is irresistible, there is no fence against it: and it may allude to *Ezek. 38. 2.* where Gog and Magog are to be destroyed by hail: the expressions of the judgement may be borrowed, as the names of the enemies, from Gog and Magog. The greatness of it, is further set out by the effect on reprobate men who are the object of it: they now break out in open blasphemy against God, so that the last wrath mendeth them not, though it be great. That exceeding greatness of it, without mixture of mercy, is insufferable and insupportable, and yet they are continued in a being after such a plague. We must therefore look upon it as an eternal judgement; for a temporal life could not sustain men under it, but in hell: although malice being now inveterate and at its height in reprobates and devils, so as they neither fear nor love the Lord, but do constantly blaspheme as their continual exercise under their plagues, yet are by the revenging justice and power of God sustained in a being for ever, for the declaration of the glory of his Justice: and now the sentence being past on them, we are to look upon this obdured, desperate maliciousness rather as the just fruit of former sins, than as having influence to encrease their punishment after their final doom. It must be a dreadful thing to be in hell, especially after the last judgement.

## LECTURE I.

### CHAP. XVII.

*Verf. 1.* **A**nd there came one of the seven Angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither I will shew unto thee the judgement of the great whore, that sitteth upon many waters.

2. With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.



We have had a little view of Gods judgements against Antichrist and Babylon his seat in the former principal, and last typical prophesie of the the vials, which carried it on to the last judge-

ment. Now, followeth the last explicatory prophesie, in two visions: wherein some special things mentioned in the former, more darkly and shortly, are more fully explained. The holy Ghost aiming hereby clearly to point out what this Babylon



The holy Ghost aiming hereby clearly to point out what this Babylon or antichristian Church, and who this Antichrist is, (the one in opposition to the true Church, the other to Christ, the right Head and Sovereign thereof) with a more clear description of them, their actions and ruine. We are therefore to look on this prophesie, and especially on this Chapter, as a special key for opening the main mysteries concerning these things which are delivered in the former prophesies. In order to which, and for understanding of what followeth, in general we premit these things.

1. Concerning the scope, it is in these words, *Chap. 17. 1. I will shew unto thee the judgement of the great whore: by which is meant not only nor mainly the last judgement, or last step of her judgement under the seventh vial; for, all which followeth, as the destruction of Babylon, Chap. 18. which is the seat or throne of the beast, belongeth not to the seventh, but to the fifth vial; nor the battel of Armageddon, where the beast is taken, belongeth not to it, but to the sixth: and this would make the story of the seventh more comprehensive than it will bear.* But we take in the remarkable events on the beast and his throne, which are by temporal judgements to be carried on by the Kings, who, once having given their power to this beast, shall afterwards withdraw from her, and piece and piece hate her, and make her naked, as is clear, *vers. 16.* all which cleareth, that this following vision (*Chap. 17. 18. and 19.*) doth belong to the fifth and sixth vials, and not to the seventh.

2. Concerning the series and placing of them, it is thus to be done. 1. He describeth (*Chap. 17.*) the object of these judgements, to wit, the whore and the beast, and who are to be understood by them, with a general hint at the instruments to be made use of in their ruine. Then, (*Chap. 18.*) he more fully and pathetically sheweth the temporal destruction of that city or whore, by the following lamentations of her followers: which sheweth it not to be the last judgement on her, which could have nothing following; but that judgement on the beasts seat, mentioned under the fifth vial, *Chap. 16.* Then (*Chap. 19.*) he goeth on to describe the events of the sixth vial in the battel of Armageddon, which was defective (till supplied there) *Chap. 16.* after these, in the last vision (*Chap. 20. 21. 22.*) till *vers. 6. 7. &c.* he setteth out the events of the seventh vial: wherein *Rome*, is not only destroyed, as in the fifth; and the beast, as in the sixth: but the Dragon in his universal dominion, which belongeth to the seventh vial. So, *Chap. 18.* expoundeth the fifth vial; 19. the sixth; and 20, 21. the seventh; and this 17. *Chap.* maketh way for all.

3. For this 17. *Chap.* (which is a ground well premitted to all the rest) it hath three parts, 1. An introduction, or preface, containing the occasion of what followeth; or, the proposing of the sum and scope of the vision following. This is in the Angels words to *John*, *vers. 1. 2.* 2. There is the vision it self, more darkly represented to him in types, or in a figurative vision. This is from *vers. 3.* to *vers. 6.* 3. From that to the end, we have a clear interpretation (upon the occasion of *John*'s wondering) more fully expounding this than any other vision is expounded. Concerning which, *Observe* more particularly.

1. That there is great odds between the figurative expressions, in which the vision is set down, and these by which it is interpreted. The vision and prophesies are set down darkly under figures, and we must take them so; and to take them literally were absurd: because they need interpretation, but the interpretation, is in plain words and more properly to be taken. Otherwise, to expound one allegory by another as obscure, were no exposition, and contrary to the Angels scope here, which is by this interpretation to make *John* and us know

the meaning of the vision, and contrary to the manner of exposition in all other places, as (*Chap. 1. 20.*) the seven Candlesticks are the seven Churches, literally so, and no more, as they are named. The seven Stars the Angels, or Ministers of these Churches: and (*Chap. 7.*) these are they who are come out of great tribulation, i. e. so indeed. And therefore here, though in the vision, heads and horns be not to be properly and literally understood, yet in the interpretation, seven heads are seven hills, or ten horns ten Kings, they are literally and properly to be taken, especially when the Angel circumstantieth the hills, such as the woman sitteth upon; and the Kings, by this, that five be past, one is and the other is to come; and the ten Kings, not as yet to have received power, but to get it afterwards, and so forth. All which demonstrate, that the Angels purpose and words are to be literally understood. So the woman, the city, (*vers. 18.*) is so circumstantiated by her dominion, as constraineth it literally to be understood.

2. Concerning this woman and whore, *Obf. 1.* That the woman and whore are both one city or state, but diversly considered: for, she who is the whore, *vers. 1.* is styled and represented as a woman, *vers. 4.* and the woman there represented, hath the whores name, *vers. 5.* yet (I say) diversly considered, for, to be an whore and an adulteresse-whore, such as the Scripture useth to mention to this scope: therefore this name is given to *Israel* in their defections, and not to Heathens, because it importeth a Contract and Marriage with some party and a foul breach of that tie. The whore then, as such, can be no city that never was Christian, but some eminent Church, making defection to idolatry and falling from the Faith given to God their husband; at least, this engagement to Him, must prevent their being accounted so notorious, an harlot. And, 2. as the woman and whore are one; So *Babylon* (called the great city, *Sodom*, *Chap. 11. vers. 8.* and the whore, are the same, as appeareth by their names, *vers. 5.* and *vers. 18.* and their practices are the same, to wit, to allure to fornication, *Chap. 14. 8.* to persecute, *Chap. 11.* and their ruine and judgement is one. Compare *Chap. 14. 9. 10. &c.* *Chap. 16. 19. Chap. 18. 2. &c.* And where the epithet *great*, is added to *City*, *whore* or *Babylon*, the same singular party is described, but in diverse considerations, either of her dominion, as *vers. 18.* or whoredoms, oppressions, pride, or some such thing, for which she getteth diverse names, and is represented by diverse types.

3. Concerning this woman it is by most of the Fathers applied to *Rome*. *Tertullianus*, lib. *adversus Judeos*, Cap. 9. *Sic & Babylon, apud Ioannem nostrum, Romana urbis figuram importat proinde & magne & regno superba, & Sanctorum debellatrix*, that is, *Babylon*, in our *John*, is a figure of the city of *Rome*, being so great, so proud of the Empire, and the destroyer of the Saints. The like he hath, lib. 3. *contra Marcionem*, Cap. 13.

*Hieronymus*, *epist. 17. ad Marcellam, nomine Pauli & Eustochii*, *epist. 151. Algasiae, quest. 11. Comment. in Cap. 47. Esaiæ. in lib. Didymi de Spir. Sancto, prefatione ad Paulinianum. Ambrosius Ansbertus in locum: where he saith, Hoc manifestum est, i. e. It is manifest. Also Victorinus, Primasius and others, cited by *Fulk* in his answer to the *Rhemists*, 4. note upon the place.*

Nay, *Augustine* (howbeit cited for another opinion concerning what is meant by *Babylon* from his Comment. in *Psalm. 26.*) doth concede what we say, lib. 18 *De civitate Dei*, Cap. 2. & 22. And *Ambrosius Caesariensis*, Comment. in locum, granteth the same to be the judgement of diverse: whence *Fulk* gathereth, That this was the common opinion of the ancient Greek Fathers.

The same is granted by the most learned of the Papists themselves. *Baronius*, (*Annal. Tom. 1. An. 45.*) hath these words, *Roman*

Roman, in *Apocalypsi Joannis eodem nomine* (*Sci. Babylonis*) nōtatum esse, in confesso est apud omnes, i. e. That Rome, in the Revelation of John, is designed by the same name, to wit, of Babylon, is confessed by all.

*Bezzarmino* is both frequent and full in this, *lib. 3. De pontif. Romano. Cap. 13.* having, first, proposed that opinion of *Augustine, Arethas, Haymo, Beda and Rupertus*, who, by the city Babylon, understand the multitude of the wicked. Adde, *Secundo, dici potest, & meo judicio melius, per meretricem intelligi Romanam*, that is, It may be said also, and in my judgement better, that by the whore, Rome is to be understood. And *lib. 2. Cap. 2.* he expressly disputeth for it; *Præterea, Joannes in Apocalypsi passim Romanam vocat Babylonem; & aperte colligitur ex Cap. 17. Apocal. ubi dicitur Babylon magna sedere super septem montes, & habere imperium super Reges terræ: Nec enim alia civitas est, quæ, Joannis tempore, imperium habuerit super Reges terræ, quam Roma, & notissimum est super septem colles Romanam edificatam esse*, that is, Moreover, John in the Revelation, every-where calleth Rome Babylon, and it is evidently gathered from the 17. of the Revelation where Babylon the great is said to sit upon seven hills, and to have dominion over the Kings of the earth: Neither was there any other, which in John's time had power over the Kings of the earth besides Rome; And it is a most known thing, that Rome was builded upon seven hills. See also his third Book, *Cap. 5.*

The same is the judgment of *Eftius*, in 4 *Sent. Dist. 47. Sect. 9.* and of *Ribera* upon the place. The *Rhemists* also acknowledge, that Rome heathen may be understood here, and *Alcasar* confirmeth it; Also *Cornelius à lapide, Blasius, Viegas* and others.

Reasons in the Text do constrain it so to be understood. 1. Its local situation, This whore is a City sitting on seven hills in John's time: whereof afterward. 2. It is an Empire or City, which had before that changed five sorts of Governments, had then the sixth, unto which one other was to succeed, as Popes have done, who were not come in John's time. 3. It is (*vers. 18.*) clear from its Dominion, she is that city, that great city, which then commanded all the Kings and great men of the earth: which grounds (I say) make even the adversaries apply it to Rome, but they fall in two foolish shifts, some applying it to Rome heathen, others to Rome under the Antichrist, who (they say) is yet to come. Of these we shall speak particularly in the close of the Chapter, and now premit,

1. That this beast, that beareth or carrieth the woman, is the same mentioned, *Chap. 11.* that cometh out of the bottomless pit, and killeth the witnesses, and the same with that beast, *Chap. 13.* their rise is one with this, out of the pit, *vers. 8.* Their description in heads, horns, and exercise in persecuting the Saints and maintaining blasphemies, and the time that they belong unto, will be one; that beast, *Chap. 13.* riseth after the wounding of the sixth head; This when that Government, which then was, is expired: yet fall they under diverse considerations, as the two beasts formerly, *Chap. 13.* The beast is as the Husband or rather Adulterer, the woman, the wife, or whore; the woman representeth an apostate Church, or the body; the beast here supporting her, pointeth at the head or mungrel power sustaining her and acting her, which in respect of absoluteness, tyranny, and persecution (though in a kind distinct from the former, yet) become they one, as we will hear.

2. Observe, that there is a great propinquity betwixt the woman or whore, and this beast, they belong to one time: for, the beast carrieth her, and they appear together, They are of one colour, scarlet, They have both blasphemies on them and fornications, (the same upon the matter) they both are up together, the woman is great when the Kings give the beast

their power, when they withdraw it, then she cometh down, his throne, which was the Dragons, (*Chap. 13.*) is her seat, to wit, the seven hills: from which nearness, its evident they must dwell together.

3. This beast then must signifie such an Empire and Dominion as doth not only support Rome, the city, but Rome a whore, and that not as a temporal head merely by force keeping down men under it, as did the old Roman Empire; but such a head as the world wondereth at, as is *Chap. 13.* and here also, *vers. 8.* and such a head as when ten Kings, out of the ruins of the old temporal Empire, shall assume Dominion and sovereignty to themselves, and withdraw from him, yet willingly they shall yield their power to be disposed of by this beast: and so long as they reverence him, the whore is in no fear by them, but when they cast him off, then she is burnt. By which it appeareth, that as by the woman the Roman Church is described, in opposition to the true Church, *Chap. 12. 1.* called a woman there; so, by the beast must be the Roman sea, or the Papal power, by which this whore is supported, and to whom the Kings of the earth give their power, and after whom the whole world hath long wondered, as was cleared (*Chap. 13.*) of this same beast: and the propositions laid down there, are also to be applied here.

4. We would consider at what time this which is spoken of the beast and whore, is to be applied to Rome, and the powers which govern Rome, which is the beast, as the other is the woman. There are these characters to find it out by, which now at the entry we shall but in general propound, 1. It is the time when the beast should appear, as he riseth from the bottomless pit, *vers. 8.* to wit, in the last state of the Empire, before his utter ruine: and so it is not that which was in John's time, any lawful succeeding power (which cometh not from the pit) but it is that which the Dragon gave, *Chap. 13.* an authority and sovereignty invented by the devil, and not warranted by the Word, such as is *Universal Bishop, Prince of Pastors, and Vicar of Christ*: so it is no meer civil power, though persecuting: for then, as it was in John's time, it might have been said to have ascended from the pit, and it had not been peculiar to the future state of the Empire, which is a foreign Government of an other rise than these which went before, such as that of the Popes, who are distinct and different from Emperours. 2. It is Rome under the last head of seven, whereof five were but past in John's time, and *Cæsars* were the sixth: the seventh called the eighth for his twofold consideration (as *Chap. 13.*) then was not come; for, this last head is expressly called the beast, *vers. 11.* Therefore Rome under none of the first six Governments is the beast here, but under the seventh or eighth, which in Rome succeeded to Emperours, or *Cæsars*; for, this last is to have none after it. A third character is, to try the time by the horns, That Government of Rome is to be the beast, which shall have with it ten Kings reigning, which had not received their Kingdom in John's time, *vers. 12.* Again, it agreeth to that state of Rome, when other Kings, that have withdrawn their temporal subjection from the Emperours, shall yet unanimously and harmoniously of their own good wills give their power unto, and be at the devotion of this beast. 3. These Kings shall be especially employed by this beast in making wars against the Saints, till God discover the whores rottenness to them or some of them, *vers. 14.* compared with *vers. 16, 17.* It must then be applicable to that time when persecutions abounded through all the Christian world by the Laws of all Kings and Kingdoms, which was when the Prophets prophesied in sackcloth and were killed, *Chap. 11. and 13.* A fourth character we take from that, that the woman is called a whore; therefore it cannot agree to Heathen Rome, for she was not then married nor ever called a whore.



5. The last thing we premit, is, concerning the times mentioned, as past, present and to come : whey they are particularly differenced, they are not to be confounded, yet that any thing in the vision is affirmed in the present time, it will not prove it then to have been, seing it is ordinary for things to come, to be represented as present or past.

More particularly, we come now to the preface of the vision, *vers. 1. and 2.* Wherein the sum and scope of the vision is proposed : In which, consider, 1. the thing proposed to be shewn, It is the *judgment of the great whore.* 2. some properties of that whore hinted at. 3. By whom this is revealed.

In the proposition, the word *whore*, (which in all languages cometh from mercenariness) shortly implyeth two things, 1. An engagement on the party sinning, there is a breach of wed-lock-bond, as *Exek. 16. 38.* 2. The nature of the sin as inconsistent with the nature of that tie, to wit, Idolatry, &c. with which God will have no communion : though many other infirmities may consist with that bond of Marriage, yet this is particularly whoredom in Scripture, a peoples shameful prostituting themselves to idols and strange worship, who were engaged to God. See *Hos. 4. 12, 13.* with the right exposition of that place. So here, by *whore* is understood some city or state, as *vers. 18.* yet such as hath been engaged to God and hath made defection from him to Idolatry. In which respect, *Israel, Judah and Jerusalem* do get the name of *harlots* peculiarly, and are charged with spiritual fornication beyond other Nations because of this their tie to God which others had not. Beside, this whore is painted out in opposition to that woman and wife, *Chap. 12.* which vanished : and this whore and strumpet appeareth in her place. 2. By *judgment* we understand her ruine, especially when it cometh to her seat, which is the great city, and is here manifested to *John*, 1. to shew that it was certain, and so to prevent stumbling at that whores greatness and pomp. 2. To shew that it came not by guess, but that God had ordered her ruine. 3. To begin this explication with the fifth vial preceeding, *Chap. 16.*

2. The property of this whore hinted at here, is, her great-

ness ; Thus to distinguish this corrupted Church from ordinary defections, heresies and schisms, whereby often the married Spouse of Christ hath been an harlot, and particular Churches have degenerated. This is the *great whore*, looking to the great defection and falling away, spoken of in Scripture, *2 Thess. 2.* to be in the days of Antichrist, and the greatest eclipse that the light, after Christs days, had to endure. This greatness of this whore, is four ways expressed and proven, 1. *She sitteth upon many waters, vers. 1.* to set out the greatness of her temporal dominion, she that was a mistress over People, Nations, &c. *vers. 15.* is to be this whore, and by her whoredoms and idolatries was to keep these under her power. 2. She is a great whore in respect of these who sin with her and share of her idolatries, superstitions and errors. *These are the Kings and great men of the earth,* such have been Popish for many generations. 3. In respect of the extent of her whoredom or commonness of it : It is not only with Kings, but indifferently, she proposed unto and did bear in her strumperies on all sorts, great and small ; the meanest behoved to bear her mark, *Chap. 13.* even all the inhabitants of the earth. 4. She is a great whore in respect of that degree of whoredoms wherewith she hath intoxicated them. She hath made them drunk with the wine of her fornications. 1. Her sin is fornication, which ordinarily in the Old Testament is applied to Idolatry, in putting some other in Gods room. Now there is no Christian Church hath degenerated in this respect to own Images and Idolatry but Rome. 2. She hath entysing ways (as poisoned cups of wine) to allure to her idolatries : Many threatnings, promises and false miracles have been made use of to engage the world to this. 3. She maketh them drink of these till they be drunk, being through Gods judgment deluded, as *1 Thess. 2.* mad and rationally addicted to and bent on that way of superstition, as appeareth by the many Abbacies, Monasteries, superstitious titles and submissions given to Popes, and persecutions against all her faithful opposers, which bear witness how drunk the world hath been with that conceit of the Roman Church.

## LECTURE II.

*Vers. 3. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness : and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads, and ten horns.*

4. *And the woman was arrayed in purple, and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.*

5. *And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.*

6. *And I saw the woman drunken with the bloud of the Saints, and with the bloud of the Martyrs of Jesus : -----*

**T**He vision it self followeth to the 7. *vers.* and there are two circumstances premitted, *vers. 3.* before it be represented to *John*, as contributing for the disposing and fitting of *John*, for the beholding of it. 1. He is carried in the Spirit : which holdeth forth the frame of his mind ; he was not in body transported, but by the Spirit ; his soul was withdrawn from its ordinary way of making use of bodily organs to another more immediate

and sublime way of receiving impressions of what was represented, such as was spoken of *Chap. 1. 10.* signifying that it is needful to be spiritual before one be capable of the visions of God ; a spiritual man and a spiritual frame, is the best discernor of these, *1 Cor. 2.* 2. He is taken to the wilderness : by that extasie he is removed from ordinary commerce to a wilderness, where that whore is represented to him, though it be not her dwelling. By this is implied, 1. That spiritualness of frame and

and abstractedness and retiredness go often together; one in the Spirit, will be often apart in private, as our blessed Lord was. 2. That an abstracted, retired frame of heart, is fittest for discerning what is right and what is wrong. It is not at Court where folks come soonest to discern the whore, the glistering of that shew keepeth men from the right up-taking of her: But when men soberly retire to think of things in the most abstracted manner, then what seemeth gold to others, is often found but to be gilded to them, as here, *vers. 4.*

When John is thus qualified and composed, then is the vision represented: an uncouth sight, a woman described in four or five properties or marks, 1. by the beast which supporteth her, *vers. 3.* which beast is in four characters set out. For understanding of which, beside what is said, *Observe* That by woman is understood here the whore formerly mentioned, to wit, a whorish Church, or, a faithful city turned to be an harlot, *Isa. 1.* Consider then this woman two wayes. 1. simply as a woman, so it is the city Rome that then was. 2. as a whore, so it is the apostatized Church of Rome which though in Johns time it was not come, yet was in vision represented to him as come. By beast in general, some wicked Dominion or Empire (as *Dan. 7.*) must be understood.

More particularly, We may take the beast in a fourfold consideration, 1. complexly with its seven heads, as in any form of its Governments; so it pointeth out the Roman Empire indefinitely, as it was before Johns time under the five heads who were fallen, as it was in his time under the sixth, and was to be afterward under the seventh: There is but one beast in all, thus considered. 2. We may consider the beast (to speak so) as a body, or the beast without relation to any head, so it holdeth forth the Empire, Dominions, or Countries, which made up a Monarchy under any of these sorts of Governments or heads. It is a body, upon the matter the same, however its Governments changed. This seemeth in the exposition to be called the Peoples, Tongues, and Languages, *vers. 15.* on which the woman sitteth, and is expressed by many waters, in the preface, *vers. 1.* on which the whore sitteth, as she doth here on the beast. 3. We may consider the heads as distinct from the beast, and so they are the formes of Governments which successively guided that beast and supported that city. And thus the last head, which succeedeth the *Cæsars*, which did reign in Johns time, will be the Pope or Popacy) who now hath headed that Empire for many years. By the former heads, the woman, as a city, is supported, by the last as she is a whore. 4. We may consider the beast, as under, and acted by the last head the Pope, so by it, is represented the Roman sea, (or *sedes Romana*) which by Religion, under pretext of Christs Headship, ruleth as broadly as ever any of her former states did, as appeareth by what was said, *Chap. 13.* In this respect, it is of an Ecclesiastick nature, to hold out a twofold respect in this beast beside any of the former; so this fourth consideration taketh up the beast as the Authority ruling, and the whore as the city where he ruleth: for (*Chap. 19.*) he as a Beast or Governour, hath a being when the whore is destroyed in the 18.

If it be asked here, Under what notion the beast is considered in this place? *Ans.* 1. Under the last, as it is headed with the Pope, and under pretence of Religion domineereth. *Reason 1.* It is the same beast, *Chap. 13.* but that looketh to the last head of this beast or state of this Empire, as is said 2. Because only the last state of this beast contemporateth with this cities becoming a whore to be supported by it. 3. It is the state of the beast which then was to come, and the sixth was then in being: therefore it is the last, for it is to go to perdition. 4. It is the beast which all wonder at, that Kings give their power willingly unto, which is expressly called the beast, *vers. 8.* which should ascend, &c. and the beast to

which the Kings shall give their power, *vers. 13.* and with whom they receive power, *vers. 12.* which only are true under the last state of the beast, it being not so with any of the former Governments, where heads were crowned and not the horns, *Chap. 12.* here, the horns were crowned, *Chap. 13.* and are Kings in respect of temporal jurisdictions; yet these same Kings, under pretence of spiritual power, are as much kept under the beast with the seventh head, as ever under any of the former.

If it be further asked, how the woman sitteth on that beast? It is clear two wayes, 1. she sitteth on it, as having her principal seat in the chief seat of that Roman Empire; she sitteth on that Dominion, and hath the city Rome for her nest. Hence (*vers. 9.*) in the exposition it is thus cleared, she sitteth on the beast, i.e. on the seven hills, which is the center of the beasts Dominion; and on many waters, that is, that same Empire. 2. It is expounded in that word, the beast that carrieth her, *vers. 7.* that is, supporteth her by its authority and keepeth that city (which otherwise had been desolate) in some grandour by her, as in *Chap. 15.* even as she was made famous by being the seat and residence of these who formerly managed the authority of that Dominion.

This then is the first thing whereby this whore is described, the power or Empire wherein she dwelleth, and whereby she is supported, to wit, Rome, or the Roman sea, which they call the rock on which their Babylon standeth as an unerring and an infallible foundation, at least so far as to discover her to be this whore.

This beast or Empire getteth four marks in the Text, 1. Her colour is scarlet, pointing out, 1. her grandour, 2. her cruelty, as the Dragon was coloured, *Chap. 12.* 2. This beast is full of names of blasphemy, *Chap. 13.* every head had blasphemies on it, that is, was blasphemous and idolatrous: but this, under the last head, is now all full of them, superstitions, idolatries, arrogant titles, and usurpations were never claimed so much by any of the former as by this: whereby appeareth, that it holdeth forth no Christian Empire, or Rome as Christian, except under its defection.

The other two parts of the description, to wit, heads and horns, are so particularly interpreted by the Angel afterwards, that we shall forbear till we come to it; which is the last part of the Chapter.

The second thing whereby the whore is described, is her pompe and outward gloriousness, *vers. 4.* Whereby is set out, 1. their pride in being so arrogant. 2. their wealth and riches. 3. her carriage to allure to her superstition with poisoned cups and such deckings as whores set themselves out by. 4. Yet her deckings are but carnal and counterfeit, decked, that is, gilded, in the original, it is not gold, but gilded external pompe only, whereby the world is taken more than with that simplicity wherewith the woman is adorned, *Chap. 12.* So this pompe appeareth yet more, 1. in the nature of her worship, in Churches, altars, holy dayes, ceremonies and garments. 2. In the nature of her officers, great Cardinals, stately Princes are her Ministers. 3. Their carriage is not needlessly observed, that their great men delight in purple and scarlet, is not by chance, but by providence. *Baronius* (as cited, *Chap. 13.*) saith it was, that Christs Priests should be in their pompe equal to the heathenish Pontifex Maximus.

The third property of this woman, is her name in her forehead, *vers. 5.* which is not, that this whore will own such a name as mother of harlots, but rather disown it: but (alluding to the manner of impudent whores, who set their badges and names to be known over their doors and on their heads) he would shew two things in the antichristian Church, 1. Great impudency in owning and maintaining these things, which



which are indeed great abominations, their publick Images and bowing to them, their disputes for and defences of their grossest superstitions, so that her whoredoms need not to be sought out by secret search, they do it before the Sun. 2: Great evidence of guilt, so that by trying her and comparing her way with the Word, it will be found clearly that she is Babylon, &c. as if these titles and superscriptions were written on her, as her name; which name is to be gathered, not out of letters and words (as neither that of *Chap. 13. ult.*) but out of doctrines, practices and others her properties, by spiritual wisdom making the application of these descriptions, both *Chap. 13. 18.* and here, *ver. 9.* for, none owning the Revelation to be Gods Word, will willingly take that name which will make them pass for Antichrist or his Church: and if this name be not literally taken, why should the number be, *Chap. 13.*

The name is in three, 1. *MYSTERY*: which sheweth there is both great iniquity here, and that it is so put together that it looketh like a mystery, either to conceive it or to discover by it such a party to be the whore. (For which it is called (2 *Thess. 2.* the mystery of iniquity, in opposition to the mystery of godliness,) in all which, Antichrist imitateth Christ, lest he should be discovered. Or, it may be mystically Babylon, as spiritually Sodom, *Chap. 11.* Babylon, not really, (which none can plead) but in a mystery. The second part of the name is, *BABYLON THE GREAT*: of which we have spoken, and applyed it to Rome. It is called *BABYLON*, first, for its headship during the fourth Empyre, as Babylon was in the second. And, secondly, for its idolatry in it self, and in its cruelty, in bringing and keeping at under Gods people. And, thirdly, because *Babylons* curse followeth it for *Babylons* sin. Of this more was said, *Chap. 14.*

The third word is, *MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH*: which setteth out a superiority and precedency in this Rome, in polluting the world actively with her pollutions, & that the superstitious way of the rest of the world is derived from her; she is as the mother and fountain that bringeth forth all superstitions. 2. A sort of precedency and priority of a Mother-Church, (as she calleth her self) she shall claim not only to be the first Church, but to be over all, as the rule and example to them. And indeed in respect of the corrupt part of the Church as it is antichristian, she is so.

It holdeth forth eminently high defection, which must have its birth from Rome, and over which Rome shall especially preside. Which titles cannot agree to heathenish Rome, that never propagated error to others, but rather civilly, and left still an *avrovalla* of Laws and Religion to the Nations they conquered. But they agree well to Rome now in its splendid titles, as *Peters Chair*, the infallible Church that cannot err, the Church that cannot be obscured or ruined, Catholick supream Judge of all, &c. and so hath given the rise to all the idolatries and superstitions that have come into the Church from it; and like a kindly mother, hath alway taken the defence of these, and fostered them as her own brood through all the world.

The last two properties of this whores description, to wit, the fourth and fifth, we put together, as holding out her practice: whereby her Inclination and guilt appeareth in these, 1. An enticing of others to that sin of fornication spiritually, by that cup which she holdeth forth to them, with her abominations, that she may entice them with these, *ver. 4.* he alludeth to what is written of the filthiest whores, to which he compareth this harlot. 2. An humor and inclination to persecution, *ver. 6.* which is three wayes set out, 1. In respect of the parties persecuted; they are, 1. *Saints*, for alleaged crimes, persecuted, and wrongs falsely imputed to them. 2. *Martyrs*, such are not only Saints unjustly wronged; but persecuted on the account of Christs truth, or for opposing her way, and witnessing against it. 2. This persecution is set forth by her contented manner of going about that work, *she thirsted for their blood and drinketh it*, as with delight and satisfaction. 3. In the degree, it came to so much, that *she was drunk with blood*, having thus drunk so much, that she was loathsome under it, senseless of it, and overflowing with the guilt of it, as drunkards are with drink beyond measure. How well this agreeth to Rome, look *Chap 13.* That by blasphemy, is holden forth Idolatry, and by whoredom, defection to Idolatry appeareth also, 1. It is one sort of blasphemy which is common to this seventh head with all the rest of the heads, and theirs was Idolatry. 2. By the common phrase of Scripture, that when *Israel* is charged with whoredom or breaking wedlock, *Ezek 16.* and blaspheming God, *Chap. 20. 27.* It is expounded in the verse following, to be their Idolatry and whoring after Idol-worship on every high hill. See *Ezek 23. 7.* and 30.

## LECTURE III.

*Verf. 6. — And when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.*

7. *And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mysterie of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.*

8. *The beast that thou sawest, was, and is not, and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition, and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, (whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world) when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.*

**T**he third part of the Chapter, to wit, the interpretation of the former vision, followeth: and before we come to it, there is the occasion of it set down, and the undertaking of the Angel, *ver. 6. 7.*

The occasion is the effect which that vision had on John, *he wondered with great admiration.* This wondering is not as the world wondereth, *ver. 8.)* which, of such a one

as John was, cannot be said) but he wondered to see that beast and the woman so linked together, and desired in himself to know the meaning of it, as the Angels words imply, *ver. 7.* a wondering what it might mean, such a type of a beast he saw formerly, *Chap. 13.* yet the exposition of some parts of the description is left till now, that it might hence appear that the knowledge of this mystery should not altogether, but piece and

and piece be manifested, and that the revealing of Antichrist is especially reserved to the last dayes of his begun ruine, and therefore it is no marvel that many of the Fathers speak obscurely and wildly concerning him.

The Angel, *ver. 7.* propoundeth to clear four things, 1. the Woman. 2. the beast that carrieth her. 3. the seven heads. 4. the ten horns which agree to her, as now under the last head. And he beginneth at the beast, because we know by this who that whore is, by knowing who supporteth her. The woman being spoken of last, We come to the first thing followed, *ver. 8.* to wit, the description of the beast in general, under the notion of his last head: for *John*, in a propheticall vision, getteth a sight of this backslidden Church, and the Empire or dominion that supported her, as she is a whore; for that is in the words, *ver. 8. The beast thou sawest*: Now the beast he saw was that which supported the whore, called (*ver. 11.*) the eighth head, pointing at the last state of this Empire: So this answereth a seeming contradiction, how this beast can be said *not to be*, and yet *to be*, *ver. 8.* for it is not to be understood simply that it is not: for in the end of the verse it is said *It yet is*, which maketh the wonder the more; and (*ver. 10.*) there was one King head to that beast, even in that time) but the opposition is to be understood in some respect, that is, it was formerly a large Empire, but is not the Empire under that Government and form which is here intended: in that respect it is but to come, which is verified in the state of this beast, which *John* saw and the Angel describeth.

More particularly, this beast is described in a threefold respect,

1. As to the time past, *it was*, that is, this is an Empire which is not now to begin simply, but long hath had dominion in the world, though differing from this under the last consideration: for, 1. It was under Kings, Consuls, Emperours and other lawfull civil Governours; this ascendeth from the pit.

2. It was a civil Government, governing by power and force of Arms: now its Ecclesiastick, bearing rule by Religion and pretext of Christs horns. 3. It was openly heathenish and idolatrous, avowedly persecuting Christians; now it is not so, a pretended Christian, but really idolatrous, and an enemy to all true Christians.

2. It is described in respect of the present time, *It is not*, that is, in respect of this last state which was coming, and is opposed to all the former, in that respect it is not come, as it was to be antichristian, and as the *Roman* city is not yet an whore, so this Government, which is the last of that beast, is not now in the world, because it is under the seventh head, and the sixth was then, *ver. 10.* for though the mystery of iniquity began to work very soon, yet this birth was not then brought forth. So it is in vain to seek this beast amongst the forms then existing, though that same Empire was in other respects in being even then.

Here also it would be adverted, That this *was*, and *is not*, looketh to *Johns* time, and is to be made a truth then, as the word in the future, but *shall arise*, cleareth: But *was* and *is not*, in the end of the verse, looketh to the time after his rising and becoming the object of the earths admiration, which is the cursed privilege of the last head that then was to arise from the pit.

3. It is described in reference to the time to come, *and or but* (as often) *shall arise*: though he be not yet come, yet he shall come, and because there was most difficulty to know him that was to come, and it is most concerning also to Gods people, That future state is set out also in a further description in these four,

1. In his rise, *He shall ascend out of the bottomless pit*: where two things are insinuated. 1. Concerning his nature and kind. 2. Concerning his order or manner of rising. By this

original, from the bottomless pit; we understand the same thing, as *Chap. 9.* of his being Angel of the bottomless pit, his arising from thence, *Chap. 11. 7.* and his getting power from the devil, *Chap. 13. 5.* All which imply, not only that he should be of a hellish disposition, but that his power or form of it, which was to succeed that which then was; should have a rise, specially from hell, that is, should be no civil Government of any sort (all which, *Rom. 13.* are Gods Ordinances,) nor merely a power abused by the devil in oppression and persecution; for, that had not been any peculiar mark to this beast, or this state of the beast, for all the former almost were such, and so it would not reach the Angels scope, it must then be understood of a Government unwarranted by God, and a meddling in things not put in mens power, an office not acknowledged in the Word (such as Papacy is) but in effect, a power especially plotted by the devil, and brought out of hell to supply the Dragons place, when he should be dethroned in the heathen Emperours. By which it appeareth, that this is a singular dominion in respect of its rise, as being specially obliged to the devil for that, and singular in its usefulness to him, which can be spoken of no ordinary Government, though the persons be sinful that are in it.

Secondly, This, *and shall ascend, &c.* implyeth, 1. a great height this beast should come to from small beginnings, as *Chap. 13.* 2. That *gradatim*, or piece and piece, he should come to it: not all at once at an height, but one step of usurpation after another, till the height were come unto, but in a covert way, as papacy arose: so that there seemeth to be some interval, as it were, between the beast that *was* and *is*, his evanishing in that shape which he then had, and the last beasts appearing: in which respect it is said, *Chap. 13.* peculiarly of this change, that one head was wounded, and discerned to be so, before it was recovered by this last. For the time and manner of this rise, see more *Chap. 9.* and *Chap. 13.* Only here it appeareth, that the future state of the *Roman* Empire, which should be in its nature and rise different from the former states thereof, is the state that is set out by this beast, and all know that this is the Papacy, or *Pontificatus*.

2. This last state of the beast (which in this Chapter is called commonly the *beast*) is set out in his ruine, as he was under that form to succeed what had gone before, so that there should be none after him; for *he shall go into perdition*, 1. Implying an evanishing of this beast under this head, and not only the changing of this state; for that had not been peculiar to it, but common with the former. All bygone states are comprehended in *what was*; and this future state or consideration of the beast, taketh in all which was to come of him. 2. It implyeth a peculiar destruction waiting for him, different from the former. 3. A slowness in its on-going, though there be a certainty of its fulfilling, yet not at once. If Papacy be this head then, we cannot look for an Antichrist to succeed it, seeing it hath succeeded to the state that then was. It may also mean an active perdition in respect of destroying others, in which respect (*Cap. 9.*) he is called *Apollyon*, and (*2 Thess. 2.*) the son of perdition: for this describeth him best in his nature, and is like one who cometh from that fountain from which he hath his rise.

3. He is described by the welcome he should have in the world when he arose, or the effect he should have in the world, *They that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names are not written in the Lambs book*. This setteth out the abhorrence of his reception, or the obedience that should be given him, in four: 1. In extent, *the whole world*, almost all the *Roman* Empire; (except some Elect ones by God kepted from that impurity, as also, *Chap. 13.*) it is as broad as ever it was in any form before. 2. There is the kind of subjection, expressed by *wondering*, a superstitious subjection to him as



to same Deity, not meely as to a civil Governour, as in the former heads, (for, such subjection many Elect children gave) but this is an Idolatrous adoration, such as Papists give to their Popes. 3. It setteth out the degree of subjection, this of admiration is more nor ordinary, and is to be wholly at the beck and command of this beast; under this consideration, it is a superstitious devorednesse to him. 4. There is the motive of all this, it is willingly; they admire him, not by constraint of arms, but by a mistaken devotion, they of themselves give up and enslave themselves to him, as is said of the Kings, *vers. 13.* they shall give their power to the beast, and *vers. 17.* they agree to do it. They were now out of temporal subjection, the Empire having become weak, and they upon that had got their Kingdom, yet this admiration had such influence on them, as to make them universally yeeld to this beast upon this account, more willingly than Armies had made them do to the former.

The exception put in a parenthesis, (*whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world*) not only holdeth forth that compliance to be an exceeding sinful defection, even such as the Elect should not, yea, to the end cannot continue in it: But, 1. It sheweth there is a difference made by Jesus Christ of Elect and Reprobate, as if by uame they were written in distinct Books. 2. It sheweth it is eternal, and so without dependance on our free wills, it is before the world. 3. It sheweth, that our standing and being kept clean, is a fruit of Election, and not our Election a fruit of our foreseen faith, or works. It is, *they admire not, because they are written in the Lambs Book; and not, they are written, because they admire not.* 4. It sheweth a suitableness in the end and midses; these Elected to Glory are brought to it by Holinesse, (*Eph. 1. 4.*) and Sanctification, *2 Thess. 2. vers. 13.* in being kepted from such filthinesse, as others fall in, and which otherwise they would have fallen in; and on the contrary they go to damnation, falling in sins, which are the causes of their destruction, though not of their reprobation, yet the decrees in respect of their ends are not without respect to these midses, although not grounded on them.

4. And lastly, he is in this last consideration described by the ground of his admiration, which pointeth at the state it agreeth unto. This is proposed by way of riddle, *when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.* This is to be understood with respect to the time of the beasts actual existing under the last consideration, wherein he is admired, and seen by the inhabitants of the earth, and so not only *was*, and *is not*, as in the former part of the Ver. when this state was to come; but now *it is*: so it differeth in the notion of timing it, from what it was formerly: and is thus to be understood, They see now an Empire, which being before that time, was exceeding different from this, 1. In form. 2. in nature or kind, *ut supra*: the heads then were crowned, *Chap. 12.* now the horns. 2. *It is not*, that is, It is a Dominion, but it is not the former which was, it is spiritual, and so admired. 2. It lordeth and ruleth over ten Crowned Kings, the former did over ten Legats, Proconsuls, or Governours of Provinces. 3. It useth not arms directly, but Excommunications, Censures, &c. 4. It was openly heathenish and idolatrous, now it is secret under pretext of Christs Vicar, so that old form is away. [For, this beast may be two wayes conceived, 1. in its general complex consideration. 2. more particularly, in its heads and horns. In the general consideration, he compareth the whole beast in its Ecclesiastick nature complexly with the whole beast considered as a temporal Empire (considered also complexly,) as under any of its first six heads; so this last beast, which supporteth the whore upon an Ecclesiastick account, is opposed to its civil consideration as a civil power which went before. In this sense there are but two states of

this beast, one that was present, and to passe when this last succeeded, another to come. But when he considereth again the beast more particularly in respect of its heads and horns, and compareth the Governments among themselves, *vers. 10, 11.* there are seven forms, whereof five were past, one present and one to come. Hence it is, that he calleth this Ecclesiastick state of this beast the eighth, looking to its distinct nature from the former; and also the seventh, as it is, upon the matter, the same power, continuely the Dominion of Rome in one series with the former forms, even as the two beasts were distinguished, *Chap. 13.* upon that diverse account, though upon the matter one. So this first *was*, and *is not*, is no contradiction; for, the beast, *i. e.* the Empire then was, yet was not this power come as the supporter of the whore, but was to come, in which respect he is looked upon as distinct from all the other heads.]

The third step, *is, and yet is*, that is, though it now differ much from what it was, yet it is really that same Dominion, upon the matter, by other spiritual weapons, 1. ruling as amply as ever their predecessors did. 2. having as full and absolute rule as ever it had. See for this, two sayings of Bellar. *lib. 3. de Pontif. cap. 21. pag. 301. cited Chap. 13.* 3. It ruleth as tyrannously as any of the former, encroaching on others liberties, till it bring them under, and when it hath done, it exerciseth its power also cruelly, especially against the Saints, as, *vers. 14. and Chap. 13.* 4. It keepeth the former throne and seat, though under another form, it getteth the Dragons seat and Authority, *Chap. 13.* and these People, Nations and Languages, and Kings that formerly had the former beast for their temporal lord, they have Papacy for their spiritual. 5. in respect of its blasphemous idolatry and superstitions, which though they differ someway in kind, yet for number they are as many, for guilt as great, for effects of wrath as dangerous: so that who would compare the many Images, dayes and Temples before applied to the idols of the heathens, which now are called and turned into Images, dayes and Temples of the Saints, they might say the idolatry, upon the matter, is the same, though the names be changed, even as their Churches are. See *Chap. 13.* This, upon the matter, is the new formed image of the beast, spoken of there. In all which respects, though it might be said that this beast is not the former, in some respect, yet materially it is in being, as the Text saith.

Hence this argument may be formed, That Government or Dominion in the world, which in some respect, to wit, as civil, was before Johns time governing all; yet, as such, that is, as Ecclesiastick and under a different consideration, was not come in his time, but shortly was to succeed that which then was over Rome, yet as differing from it; and in its rise and nature to be no ordinary civil power, but an unwarrantable Ecclesiastick power, at which the world was to admire, and unto which they were willingly to give a more absolute and divine subjection than to any of the former powers; under that Government Rome is the antichristian whore, That Government is antichristian, and the head and supream Governour thereof is Antichrist: But the Papacy is that Government, which was not in Johns time, yet succeeded to that which then was, in amplitude of Government, and to which men willingly yeeld, and have yeelded such an obedience and subjection, which now is begun to go into perdition, &c. Therefore that Church is the whore, that Government antichristian, and that head and Governour is Antichrist: for he immediately succeeded to that which was in Johns time, and according to Bellar. *de Pontif. lib. 2.* since the Gospel came to light, goeth into perdition; and all these marks agree to him only. Therefore he is the state pointed at by these. Or, thus, That form of Dominion over the Roman Empire, which is not in kind, one with what

what it was in *John's* time, but immediately succeedeth to that, and yet in respect of amplitude of Government, and degree of subjection to it, is the same with, or more ample, than the former, though upon a different consideration and ac-

count; that Dominion or Empire under that form, is the beast, seen by *John*: but Papacy is such a Government, and the Empire of *Rome* under it, is such. Therefore it is the Dominion described by him, as the Antichristian Kingdom.

## LECTURE IV.

Verf. 9. *And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth.*

10. *And there are seven Kings, five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come: and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.*

11. *And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.*

**T**He Angel proceedeth to a particular interpretation of the parts, to wit, *heads and horns*, wherein the beast was most singular and remarkable. There is a sentence casten in, before he descend to it, *Here is the mind which hath wisdom*, which is something like that, *Chap. 13. 18.* and it looketh both to what is past, (putting Readers to consider well of it) and to what is coming, pointing out something that a man of wisdom will not let pass, but take hold of these marks for discerning of the whore. The words imply, 1. a materialness in the matter written, as conducing for the understanding of this mystery. 2. A difficulty to get a mind composed to take it up, there will be need of spiritual and true wisdom. 3. That such wisdom will find what is in it, and get so much gripping as to fix them in this, who is this whore and beast: and therefore this Chapter would be the more fully insisted in. 4. It implyeth that it is a rare thing to apply these marks wisely, and that the generality of Readers will not do it. And by this we may see, that though promises be fulfilled and prophecies also, and the expressions be very obvious and palpable to any that have discerning, yet they are not so to these who have their minds blinded with prejudice and spiritual blindness: such prophecies as are most clearly fulfilled and applied to Christ, to the *Jews* are dark: and others of *Daniel* and *Ezekiel*, which undoubtedly are fulfilled, are also obscure. It is no marvel then that so many Papists, wondering after this beast, cannot wisely discern his marks; It will take wisdom to do that, which every one hath not: and therefore that argument of *Bellarmino* against the fulfilling of this prophesie, because it is so obscure to many, is of no force. He beginneth at the heads, and giveth two interpretations, or two applications of that type; or he declareth two things to be meant by it, 1. *The seven heads are seven mountains, upon which the woman, or chief city, sitteth.* 2. *They are seven Kings.* We premit this, that all the marks after described, agree to one beast, out of all which put together, the clearing of what is signified, is to be gathered. Therefore that Empire, or city, must have seven hills, which hath seven Kings; and to whom the one is applied, the other must be applied also: otherways they do not serve the scope, which is by the parts of one beast to discover the Empire meant by it in whole.

The first exposition of *heads*, is by the fixed property and natural situation of this city or woman, to wit, *mountains*. The second is, by what is successive, one to, and after one another. The former of seven mountains are contemporary, this is successive and in diverse forms.

The heads are called *mountains*, because in this they signifie

so, and we are to understand *mountains*, Kings, and to be set out by *heads and horns* in a metonymical speech, the signes getting the name of what is signified by it, not that really they are so. By these then, mountains are properly to be understood; and the number *seven* is definite also, as appeareth by the exposition which followeth; for Kings are properly seven, and the number definite, as appeareth by that, that *five are past, one is, &c.* and this suiteth with the nature of the Angels interpreting the seven Candlesticks, and seven Stars, *Chap. 1. 20.* to be seven Churches, and seven Angels as is said in the preface. These mountains then, are, 1. described by their number, seven, and if the number were not definite, but put for seven, nine, or eleven, &c. then it could not contribute to designe one place by another, which yet is here the Angels scope, who speaketh of these seven mountains, as of seven mountains famous in respect of others, and some way peculiar to this city. 2. They are described from this, that the woman sitteth on them. By *woman* we told was understood *Rome*, it is called a city, *Verse ult.* and it must be such a city as may serve particularly to discover these mountains from other mountains, they are such, saith he, as the chief city of the world sitteth on. And then this city cannot be the multitude of the wicked: for that could be no mark for *John*, or others, to discern on seven mountains from any other seven mountains. Beside, this city is not the world, or complex body of Kings, but that city that ruleth over them, under seven several Governments, as the following words clear. And the mountains are such as this woman sitteth on: now her sitting is two wayes understood in this Chapter, 1. she sitteth on many waters, *ver. 1* that is, *many peoples and kingdoms, v. 15.* over whom (*ver. 18.*) she ruleth. Thus to sit on, is to rule. 2. she sitteth in a peculiar way in one place of these peoples, whom she commandeth beyond other places, and she sitteth not so on the peoples or waters, but on the seven mountains, that is, she hath her residence, pompe, court, throne and abode there, which reacheth over many people. And this agreeth well with the angels scope, which being to open the events of the fifth vial, he insisteth on the object of it, which is the seat or throne of the beast, *Chap. 16.* These seven mountains then will be such as the Imperial city of the world not only commands over but is placed upon, and so that city will be found to be the whore, that dwelleth on seven mountains, and this Empire to be the beast that upholdeth and supporteth these, and governeth them, *ut supra.* From which it is clear, that *Rome* is designed by the angel to be this city: For, 1. *Rome* is famous for its situation on seven hills, that is a peculiar paraphrase of it both among *Greeks* and



is a peculiar paraphrase of it both among *Greeks* and *Latins*. The seven hilled City, or the City on the seven hills, and *Rome*. were still taken as one: for, at first by *Romulus* it comprehended four, he was the first founder of it; after, by the sixth King *Servius Tullius*, were three more added: hence was that yearly feast, 3. *id. Decemb.* called *sestum septimontium*: and these sayings of the Poets confirm this. *Virg. Septem quae una sibi muro circumdedit arcis.* And *Ovid. trist. Sed quæ de septem totum circumspicit orbem, Montibus Imperii Roma Deumque locus, &c.* which made it to receive these names, *Septiceps*, *urbs septicolis* & *ἑπτάκορος*, &c. and they are thus particularly named, 1. *Palatinus*. 2. *Caelius*. 3. *Capitolius*, or *Janiculus*. 4. *Aventinus*. 5. *Quirinalis*. 6. *Viminalis*. 7. *Alquilinus*, which maketh *Bellar. lib. 2. de Pont. cap. 2.* say, *notissimum est supra, septem colles urbem Romanam edificatam esse.* *Corn. à lapide, in locum*, citeth many to confirm this: and if *Rome* be the seat, the *Roman Church* is the whore, and the *Pope Antichrist*, who keepeth his court there in a special manner, though he command otherwise all the world at his pleasure; yet his chair is nailed to that seven hilled city, and cannot be removed.

That which is objected, may be answered from what is said, Say some, this city meaneth no particular city, but the company of the wicked in general which is clearly contrary to the Angels scope, which is to discover one state and city; and to the Text, which distinguisheth this city from people and Nations, over which it commandeth, and from Kings that gave their power to the beast, yet are they no small part of the wicked in the world. Beside, it is such a city as is situated on seven hills, peculiarly distinguished from others, which cannot be the wicked.

2. Say some, *seven* are to be taken indefinitely, which is also answered from the scope, that pointeth out seven hills, on which the woman sitteth beside others, to satisfy *John* in this, as in other interpretations.

3. Say some, (as *Bellar.*) though *Rome* than sat on seven mountains, yet it is not so now, but standeth (saith he) in *campo martio*. *Answ.* It is granted by *Bellarmino*, that *Rome* was then the city signified to *John*, for it then bare rule, it must then be understood of it also now, or this one type must signifie one city, or place, to *John* in his time, and another to us, which is absurd. 2. It is enough that it was built so in *Johns* time; for it is the same city, Empire, and series of Dominion still: and though, as he saith, it standeth most in *campo martio*, yet it is the same *Rome*, which before that in *Johns* time had these seven hills in it, or else the *Pope* sitteth in some other *Rome*, than *Peter* sat on in *Johns* time. 3. Though some of these hills be without the walls now, yet they are still linked to the rest by special privileges, all of them being seats of the *Popes* Pallaces, Abbacies, &c. yet on an other occasion, *Bellar.* saith, *notissimum est, eam supra septem colles edificatam esse*, that is, It is a thing most known, that *Rome* is builded upon seven hills, as is said.

The Angel, having in the first exposition of these seven heads, discovered *Rome* in its local situation, by fixed hills, he goeth on, in a second application, to do it by its fleeting and successive Governments, *ver. 10.* and *11.* In it, 1. he sheweth what further these heads hold forth, to wit, seven Kings: (it may be read, they are, or signifie seven Kings, as before, seven hills) And although one might think it hard that one Type should set forth a Hill and a King: yet the Angels particular explication leaveth no room for that debate. Then 2. he discovereth, or characterizeth these Kings in respect of time and being, that so *John* and others might the more easily discern what he proponed. *Five are fallen*, (saith he) *one is, and the other is not yet come.* 3. Because the shot of all is to discover the beast under the last head; therefore in several characters here the seventh is described in the end of the 10, and 11, verses.

For understanding this, we shal, 1. clear the words. 2. Then apply them. 3. Remove some doubts, or objections.

1. By *Kings* is not strictly to be understood Governours under that name only, but, in *Scripture*, all Governours ordinarily passe under that name; So *Moses* is called, *Deut. 33. 5.* And when *Israel* wanted all Government, *Judg. 17. ult.* it is said *In these dayes they had no King in Israel*, signifying no Governour or order, every one did what he listed. And here in *Johns* time, that Governour of the Empire bare not this name of King, though he be called the sixth. 2. Neither by *Kings* are understood Governours personally, or individual men, but a series or succession under one forme of Government in a line, as *Dan. 7. 17.* the four Monarchies, which were not any of them (save it be the third) in an individual person, yet they are called four Kings: and it must mean so here; for, *Kings* here, are as *ver. 12.* where they are called ten Kings; and shall it be thought that by these are meant ten men, who are like, and do all that is spoken of them in their own time? Experience, will say the contrary, That since the *Roman Empire* decayed, and *Kings* arose out of the ruines thereof, many ages are past; yet, what they have to fulfill on the Whore, is not yet come. And, 3. these *Kings* (as is clear) are successive one to another, and that immediately; the fifth succeeded the fourth; the sixth, the fifth, &c. and there are not two at once. 4. And that line or succession of the seven together, is to go from the rising of this Empire to its ruine; while this beast is an Empire, it is under some one of these heads, except we imagine a beast without an head: and consequently this succession taketh in so long a series, that five individual persons could not fill up the time before *John*, nor can one make it up after him; for, many days have continued since, yet the beast is not gone fully to perdition, though it then was in his time. It must then be either under the head it had then; which is false, or, it must be under the seventh, which succeeded: & however it be, it cannot be one person, who so long could continue head to that beast, 5. They must be *Kings* or Governments that are heads of one & the same body, and sit at *Rome*: for, the heads are *Kings* to that same City to which the Hills belong, seeing they describe one Beast or Empire; and they must be over many Nations, *ver. 13.* yea, the same Nations; for, there is one body of this beast under all the heads, and all the heads are Governours to one beast or body, and so are *Roman Governours*, and that of a great extent. Other wayes one head, were but half an head, or head to half the beast; and the setting out of both by one Type confirmeth this, that they are *Kings* and Hills of one City. 6. These Governours, or sorts of Governments, are precisely *Seven*, having one Empire for their Dominion, and continuing from its rise to its close; so the first Government beginneth equally with the first head, and it endeth together with the seventh, and there are neither more nor fewer; for, if the Hills be seven, and not more nor fewer, and if just five be past and no more, then the seven in whole must be so, and not more nor fewer, and the one to come must be properly one also. And to say there might be an other Government distinct from the seven, it would also say, it behoved to be an other beast or dominion: for, saith the Angel, This hath but seven, the last whereof goeth to perdition, and hath no successor.

1. From what is said, it is clear, 1. that the naming of an eight, *ver. 11.* is not to be understood as of a distinct head: For, 1. Then the beast would have eight Kings, & so would not be well represented by seven heads, or expounded by seven Kings, if there were more. 2. Then this beast (to wit, the eight) would not be one of the seven, which it is expressly said to be, *ver. 11.* and if one of seven, it must be one of the seven formerly mentioned, and that none of the first six: therefore it must be the seventh it self, which was to come. 3. The same called the eight; *vers. 11.* is all one with that, *vers. 8.* But that

that holdeth out the *Roman Empire* under its seven heads, or at least under one of them, and it is the same beast that was, and is not, which *John* saw, and which the Angel is discovering: and if he were not under any of these heads, this would contribute little to that end. Nor would it be a discovery of the same beast. 4. The head which was to come is all one with that state of the beast, *vers. 8.* that was to rise; for, there is but one state to come, and but one head to come. Now, were there eight heads, there would be two to come in *John's* time, neither could one state have comprehended the whole future form of that beast, as *vers. 8.* if it had been to be diverse, and various and under different heads. 5. If the seventh head be last, then there is not an eighth; But it is said of the seventh, it must continue but a short space, as agreeing with what is said, (*vers. 8.* of the beast, that it must go into perdition under that form which was to come: therefore it is not said the seventh, but the other (and that in the singular number) is not yet come, to shew there is but one to come. How is this called the eighth, we shall clear afterward.

A second thing from what is said, is also clear, to wit, that we cannot put any Government between the sixth head, which was in *John's* time, and the seventh or last, whatsoever it shall be found to be. And therefore we cannot (as some Interpreters do) put in either the King of *Goths* in *Italy*, who for a time commanded *Rome*, nor Christian *Cæsars*. For, 1. there are but seven in all, and none of these is the last, for there is one since. 2. All these seven heads, head and rule the *Roman Empire*, which is broader than that Kingdom of *Goths*, which wanted a great part of *Italy*, and were never Emperours. 3. The Papacy was breeding then, after the wound which was given to heathenish Emperours by *Constantine*, and never was healed, till by it, as was cleared, *Chap. 13.* But there cannot be two heads together, Therefore. All heads have names of blasphemy, which cannot be said of Christian Emperours, as such. Then fourthly beside, if Christian Emperours were an head, when ceased they to be a head? seeing they kepted some name long after they went from *Rome*, and were weakened in their power piece and piece.

The second thing whereby these Kings are set out, is clear, that is, they are such seven forms of Government, as five thereof must precede *John's* time; That is meant by this, *five are away, or fallen, one is, (to wit, the sixth) that is, one different from any of the former; the other is not, yet come.* He saith the other and not the seventh, 1. to shew there was but one to come. 2. To shew that it was to be as different from the rest, or more than any that had gone before, and according to his manner he pointeth out this last especially, because it is the scope of all to clear what concerneth him. It is said of him in this *vers.* He must continue a short space when he cometh: which I take to imply two things, 1. the certainty of this others coming, or of his continuing a time when he shall come. Thus, *when he cometh, he shall continue, &c.* holdeth forth the necessity of his continuance for a time, till he have his time of it, as well as any of the former, and that people would not think he shall vanish instantly when he appeareth. 2. It implyeth, that that continuance shall not be long, but a short space: So difficulties use to be expressed, because of the fainting of Gods people, that they may be encouraged to bear them. Hence we say, it is not short simply, as if it were a little time, a year or two, &c. but short comparatively to Eternity, he will have but a little time: And the reasons why we expound it thus comparatively, are these, 1. It is usual to the Scriptures to set out long times by short, when it speaketh of the godly their affliction; it is a moment, *Isa. 54. 1* *Corinth. 4. an hour of tentation, Chap. 3. Chap. 22. vers. 7, and 10.* That the consideration of the transitoriness of these afflictions may be comfortable to Gods people under them. 2. When the Scripture

speaketh of Antichrists tyranny, and the Churches affliction under him in any definite expression, as *Chap. 11. 12, 13.* it speaketh of it as short; and therefore when it speaketh in definite terms, it is suitable it should be so also: yet, as the former inferreth not such a short time in it self, neither can the latter. Hence it is ordinarily said in the present time, he goeth to perdition, yet it was not begun, to shew it hastened. 3. The time equivalent to this (if not longer than this) of Antichrist, is expressed in this same Chapter by an hour: for, these ten Kings arise with the beast, when the Empire decreaseth; and they give their power to him, when they get crowns, as followeth: yea, they outlive him, yet it is said, *vers. 12.* They get power one hour with the beast: which denoteth not only a contemporaneity of powers, but the short time that they both shall have, and yet not simply so, but figuratively expressed, for the comfort of Gods people, who will suffer much from both, and this hour is the same short space mentioned before and yet is it a long time in it self, so is it a short time, *Chap. 12.* after the devils down-casting which is long in it self: and, on the contrary, mercy useth to be set out in long terms.

For application then, as the first exposition of seven hills proveth it *Rome*, this of seven Kings confirmeth it, for it is not our. that *Rome*, as such an idolatrous Empire, hath been under seven Governments; five were past before this time of *John's* writing, to wit, 1. Kings, 2. Consuls, 3. Decem-viri, 4. Tribuni militum, 5. Dictators. The sixth Emperours or *Cæsars*, were then when the Angel interpreted this; the other, to wit, Papacy, was not then come, but hath since sitten on that seven hilled city, ruling amply (*ut supra*) in his dominion, as the palpable successours of him who then was.

For more full satisfaction in this application, these things are to be made out, 1. That *Rome* hath been under seven sorts of Governments, whereof five preceded *John*, the sixth was in his time, and the seventh not then come. 2. That the Papacy is this seventh who was then to come.

The first must be made out from the *Roman* story, where it is clear, 1. That when *Rome* was builded, it were governed by Kings. *Romulus* was the first, from whom were in all seven, untill *Tarquinius Superbus*, who was last (according to *Livius*) in his time, for his son *Sextus Tarquinius* his violating of *Lucretia*, the *Romans* did cast off that Government, and erected two Consuls, and a Senat to govern, who were to be changed yearly by election. This is the second form, and continued long, till the *Romans* became desirous to have all the best Laws that could be found out, gathered into one body and settled for the rule of their Government: for which cause, they choosed ten men to collect these and put them together, These were called *Decem-viri*, or that Government *Decem-viratus*. This is marked by *Livius, dec. primæ, lib. 3.* to be for the third time that *Rome* had changed its Government. But these ten men degenerating to tyranny; seeking to continue themselves in perpetual power, and one of them, *Appius Claudius*, going about to defile one *Virginia*, a maid espoused to a Souldier. By this means they drew both the People and Senate against them, and were put out when they had continued but two years. The Government again returned to the Consuls, till by the miscarriages of some in that place they also became odious to the people, who thereupon contested with the Senat to have equal power in Government, (for, before no *Plbeians* had been Consul) This made the Senat choose *Tribuns*, who were called *Tribuni militum*. They had Consular power, but were five, six, eight, or ten in number, as the people pleased who choosed them; and it was lawful to choose them indifferently, *decad. pri. lib. 4. pag. 99.* This was the fourth Government: after them there were divers contests about the Government, (which again returned to the Consuls) whereupon



whereupon (as sometimes before in difficult cases) they choosed *Dictators*, who for a time limited unto them, had supream power, and ruled all with much reverence: and in a strait, that was ordinarily fled unto, yea, sometimes there would be *Dictators* for a year, and no other Government for that time, as *Papyrius Crusor*, *Quintus Fabius*, *Dictator*, &c. This is accounted the fifth Government, which *Julius Caesar* often before his becoming Emperour possessed, to keep the Authority in himself, till afterward he was stiled *Dictator in perpetuum*. These five were all fallen before *Johns* time, and then *Rome* was governed by none of them; for *Caesar* had gotten the supream Authority after his defeating *Pompey* at *Pharsalia*, under the title of *Imperator* and *Pontifex Maximus*, by which, the Consuls power was confined within the City, and the Emperour sent unto the Provinces whom he pleased. This form succeeded by birth, adoption, or election, afterward one after another, for a long time and in *Johns* time was existing in *Domitian* the Emperour, who succeeded his Father *Vespasian*, and his brother *Titus*, in the Empire: this then is the sixth which then was.

This which is more sparsly gathered out of *Livius*, is more compendiously set down by that famous Historiographer *Cornelius Tacitus*, in the first words of his story *Urbem Romam a principio Reges habuere. Libertatem, & Consulatum L. Brutus instituit. Dictatura ad tempus sumebantur: neque Decemviralis potestas ultra biennium, neque Tribunorum militum consulare jus diu valuit. Non Cinna, non Sulla longa dominatio, & Pompeii Crassique potentia, cito in Caesarem: Lepidi atque Antonii arma in Augustum cessere, qui cuncta discordiis civilibus sessa, nomine Principis sub imperium accepit*. He seemeth to point out *Augustus* as the first Emperour, because after him there was no essay to recover their former liberty, and he got it with the Senates good will, if any should say, there are more numbred than six by *Tacitus*, as that of *Sulla*, *Cinna*, *Pompey*, and *Lepidus* with *Antonius*. *Ans.* 1. some of these men whom he nameth, do not infer divers Governments, but the exorbitant domination of some Governours, who ruled under the old and ordinary titles: *Sulla*, and *Cinna*, and *Pompey* were Consuls, and had still that name; *Caesar*, *Antonius* and *Lepidus* (if we account *Augustus* the first, as it seemeth *Tacitus* doth) they were but by violence in such places, without any such consent as *Augustus* had afterward obtained. Therefore he designeth them by their names and not their offices, as he had done the former, or as he doth to *Augustus* after, by calling him *Princeps*: So this increaseth not the number. If we reckon again *Julius Caesar* the first Emperour, (as it seemeth just) *Lepidus*, *Antonius*, *Octavius* or *Augustus*, will be Emperours, and to be reckoned under the sixth head: for, all of them had imperial power, and governed, as supream, such and such parts of the Empire, even as often there were sundry Emperours joyned, as *Dioclesian*, *Maximianus*, *Herculius*, &c. at the same time, *Constantine* and *Licinius* agreeth betwixt themselves to divide the Empire, so it was here, and it was still the same power: and this division or agreement also was only amongst themselves, without any act of the People, or consent of the Senat, and was a piece of tyranny as *Suetonius* and *Augustus* observe, and from that of *Tacitus*; as also it is clear, that though there were some intervals in some of these forms, as that Dictators were now and then, yet when they were, they were supream, and had a sort of sacrednesse beyond any other Governour or Governments, and therefore justly accounted distinct. The Consuls were both before the *Decemviri* and after them, and the *Tribuni militum* also; yet all of them make up one form, which was passed before *Johns* dayes, who wrote in the time of the *Caesars*, and so had not seen the seventh head, which was after to come.

This truth, in the matter of fact; is acknowledged

by *Bellar. lib. 1. de Pontif. cap. 2.* (though elsewhere he would question it) for there he being to reckon the changes of the Roman Government, he reckoneth, 1. *Kings*, 2. *Consuls*, 3. *Decemviri*: for, when he speaketh of *Tribuni plebis*, they were but superadded to the former Governours, and were not supream: therefore without respect to them, *Livius* reckoneth the *Decemviri* to be the third. 4. He nameth *Dictators*. 5. *Tribuni militum cum consulari potestate*: after which he addeth the Emperours or Monarchy. And certainly if there had been any more changes, he would not have omitted them, it being his scope to shew the changeablenesse of all Governments, till they resolve in Monarchy.

I know also that the same Author *Bellar.* understandeth by seven heads indefinitely all the Emperours, past, and to come in *Johns* time: but that will not consist with the Angels dividing of them in five, to have been before, one present and but one to come: for, according to that reckoning many more were to come than had preceeded that time.

The second assertion to be made out, is, That Papacy is the seventh Government of *Rome*, succeeding to that which was in *Johns* time, and so is the last: which is holden forth under that type of the seventh head, which was then to come, and this being a main point, we must insist a little to confirm it. And 1. its clear that the sixth Government which was then in *Johns* time, is now also fallen away. 2. Its clear also, that the seventh must be come: what cleareth the one, confirmeth the other; for, if the seventh be come, the sixth is fallen; (because two cannot be together) and if the sixth be gone, the seventh must be come, for there is no intermission, or interval of such length betwixt their successions.

That the sixth is gone then, and the seventh come, these things will clear, 1. It is clear from the truth of story, and matter of fact, that the Government which then ruled *Rome* and that Empire, was the Emperours or *Caesars*; but from many ages the Emperours have had no command or seat at *Rome*, nor any considerable command over the Territories of that Empire (there being other Princes since arisen, as *France*, *Spain*, &c. who command as broadly as he) therefore he cannot now be accounted a head. 2. It is clear that that City hath been a seat of a long time to another Government, which hath governed it, and (though under another pretext and on another account) hath ruled since as broad almost as the former. Neither in any reasonable way can that which is now called the Empire (being very inconsiderable in respect of what it then was) be accounted the same, or the now Emperour, the successor of these Emperours, seeing their rise is so different, as was shown, *Chap. 13.* And if it be alleaged to continue in the Emperours, Then it must either be in the Emperours of the East, (who in a more direct line succeeded them who then were) who now are fallen; or, in the Emperours of the West: But neither of these can be said: for, 1. the East is gone, neither sat he at *Rome*: nor, 2. the West, for he doth not sit at *Rome*, nor did since *Papacle* came to its height, yea, nor many years before that: and if the Emperour in the East was a head, he must continue so till his decay; and if the Emperour in the West be a head, he must have been so from his rise: And so these Empires (or rather parts of one Empire) being contemporary, there behoved to have been two heads at once, but then the Empire was broken, it was no more one. And it is to be observed, that the first division of the Empire in several Kingdoms, or parts, not subordinate one to another, or combined one with another, fell out by *Constantinus* laying it divided in three to his three Sons: for though there were at one time sundrie Emperours ruling at once before that, yet the Empire was not divided, except for particular inspection, as the Consuls used to do: and every one of them was *Augustus*, and it was still one Empire;

Empire; and therefore it seemeth, from that time, Emperours cannot be accounted to continue as heads: which on Chap. 13. is further cleared.

2. It is clear by this Chapter, if that which is prophesied to succeed the time of the sixth head, and to belong to the last Government, be fulfilled, then the sixth is gone, and the seventh is come; but that is fulfilled,

1. Many Kings that then had gotten no Kingdom have now obtained it long since.

2. These Kings having withdrawn from the Emperours Government, have since willingly given their power to another, to wit, the Pope, and soughten for him against the Lamb: which things, as they are clearly fulfilled, so are they expressly holden forth as contemporary with the last state of this Empire which was then to come, *ver. 12, and 13.* for he is the head that hath the horns, and he is the seventh head that hath Crowned horns or Kings; now these who bear the name of Emperours, have long since lost these horns; therefore they are not a head, but he must be this head, whom these horns acknowledge; and seeing they acknowledge another now, which they did not in *Johns* time, Therefore this must be fulfilled.

And therefore we conclude that the sixth Government, which then was, is past, and that the seventh hath succeeded: except we say the beast for many years hath had no head, and its before cleared also, that neither Christian Emperour nor *Gothish* King, can properly be called the seventh head of this beast: yea, or a head at all.

A third thing clear, is, that the Pope or Papacy may well be called a head or Government of this Empire; for, 1. that it is a Government cannot be denied, and of a distinct kind from any of the former. 2. It hath its seat at *Rome*, and is a King of that seven hilled city, as is also clear. 3. That it extendeth its Dominion not only over *Rome*, or that part, called now the Empire, but over at least all that was the western Empire, and further, for many years; and if the same body that is commanded or governed be the beast, the Government that commandeth it, being thus circumstantiated must be the head; or we must say, that that Empire hath not been under a head for a long time, which cannot be.

4. Therefore we may further argue, If Papacy be a Government of that Empire, it must be the seventh and last; which we take to be one, as is said: for, 1. that was not in *Johns* time, it is not that which then was; but that being the sixth, and this having succeeded to it in its seat and Dominion, must therefore be the seventh, that was not then come. 2. If all the characters agreeing to the seventh head be verified in it, Then it must be the seventh; But the first is true. *Ergo, &c.* These characters agree to the seventh: 1. To have ten Kings out of the ruine of the *Roman* Empire contemporary with it, that Government contemporary with them is the seventh; Papacy is so. 2. that these Kings give their power to it willingly. 3. that they persecute at its direction. 4. that some of them hate her again: all which are verified in the Papacy.

There are two objections against this, the last whereof will lead us to open the *11. verse. Objection, 1.* The seventh head is but to continue a short space; but that agreeth not to the Pope. *Ans. 1.* It is not a short space simply, as is before cleared; but comparatively short with a sure distinction, for which cause it is said also of the eighth, *ver. 11.* that he goeth, even from his beginning to perdition. The second *Objection*, is seemingly stronger. If the Pope be the seventh, then who is the eighth? it seemeth that would agree better to him, and therefore there must be some more Governments understood, seeing there is an eighth particularly mentioned. *Ans. 1.* The Papacy is both the seventh and the eighth, but in different respects, and on diverse considerations; for, that there are but seven, and that this eighth is so the eighth, as he must be of the seven; therefore

the very seventh, (six being before his rise, fallen) is cleared before: and therefore Papacy if it be the seventh that succeedeth the sixth which then was, it must also be the eighth; But say differently considered, 1. Papacy considered as a Prince dom, and the Pope as a Prince, he is the seventh head, in the same series with the other that went before. But, 2. Papa c being considered as an Ecclesiastick power (and so much different in nature and kind from the former) and as having a twofold relation, as a Prince and as a Pastor (or Prince of Pastors) to he is the eighth, as being so various from the former, that one of these relations setteth out but one half of him, yet is he even under this consideration indeed one of the former seven, though by himself or others he shall be thought so different from them, as to be accounted both the seventh and eighth; for which reasons, he is, (*Chap. 13.*) set out by two beasts, one holding forth his temporal power, the other his Ecclesiastick. Again, consider this beast which *John* saw complexly, as with his body whereby he carrieth the whore, he doth so differ from any head, even from the seventh, and may be called also an eighth, as a seventh. Thus being considered, he is a totum, and the head apart: but again considered as he governeth that body, he is of the seventh, (*καὶ ἐστὶν τὸ ἀντικρίστου*) he is one of that reckoning, by a Senecdoche, the beast, for that head of the beast, and so he is a seventh and eighth, as he is *is not*, and yet *is*, in diverse respects: and therefore is it observed, that though he called it *ἡ πόλις*, which is in the neuter gener in the *Greek*, yet the relative even he, *αὐτός*, is of the masculine, that looketh to *βασιλεὺς*, or King, represented by that beast, that is, the King understood by this beast in its last head, he is both the eighth and seventh, that is, of a twofold respect, and so differeth from any that went before him, which is added as a distinguishing mark to difference this last head or state of that Empire from any preceeding. *It is to come*, and when it cometh it will look like a seventh, and an eighth also, yet really is the seventh, under which form the beast shall go to destruction, and not overlive that form. Therefore (*Chap. 19.*) the beast, that is the body, and the false prophet, that is the head, go into destruction together. Hence this argument may be formed, If the seventh head here be that Government over *Rome* succeeding to that which governed it in *Johns* time, to wit, the *Roman* Emperours, Then the Pope is the seventh head (for he succeeded;) But the former is true, *Ergo*. Or if the Pope be the seventh Government succeeding to that which was then over *Rome* in *Johns* time, Then is *Rome* under him, the whore, and he is the Antichrist; But the former is truth, *ut supra*, *Ergo*.

That which *Bellar.* asserteth, *lib. 3. de Pontif. cap. 15. pag. 294.* that Antichrist shall be *ultimus Rex Romani imperii, non tamen sub nomine Romani Imperatoris*, and that he is, *supremum & ultimum caput impiorum, &c.* asserted immediately before, alluding to this, that by this last head is understood Antichrist, doth confirm this. And it may then from this be gathered, that the Pope is Antichrist, thus, If the Pope be the last governour of the *Roman* Empire; yet not under the title of *Roman* Emperour, Then he is Antichrist, that is granted; But that he is the last King of the *Roman* Empire, &c. appeareth, thus, If the Pope or Papacy be the seventh Government which succeeded to that over the *Roman* Empire which was in *Johns* time, yet under another name, Then it is the last; for the seventh is last *ut supra*; and under it the beast goeth to perdition: But the Pope is the seventh, which succeeded unto the sixth that then was, and he hath kepted the Government of a long time since, under another title than the *Roman* Emperour, *Ergo* he is Antichrist.

What is alleaged by some, that seven ages of the world are to be understood here, or the seven oppressing Monarchies where Gods people suffered, as *Assyria*, *Babylon*, *Egypt*, *Greece*, *Fif*



Grecia, &c. That may be confuted by this argument. Such Kings are understood by these seven heads as are Governments or Governours of one City, yea of that seven hilled city,

and commanded one Empire, and do head one and the same beast; But none of these forenamed are such. Therefore are not understood here.

## LECTURE V.

Verf. 12. *And the ten horns which thou sawest, are ten Kings which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as Kings on hour with the beast.*

13. *These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.*

14. *These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings, and they that are with him, are called and chosen, and faithful.*

**T**He Angel having interpreted the seven heads, he goeth on to expound what is meant by *horns*, *They are*, saith he, *ten Kings*: described, beside their number ten, in these four, 1. that they were not presently Kingdoms, (as the beast was an Empire) but were to come. 2. That they were to be in the beasts time, that is, in the last state of the beast. 3. That in their practice they would war with the Lamb. 4. In the event he would overcome them: and some reasons are given of his victory that it was certain, *ver. 14.*

In general, remember, 1. that these horns are of, and belong to, the last state of the beast, to wit, under the seventh head, which supporteth the whore; the former sixth head had ten horns, *Chap. 12.* that is, exercised its strength and malice by so many Provinces, or Pretors, or Proconsuls: but there is a difference here, This seventh head (called the eighth King) hath the same Provinces almost, and as many, but now they are Crowned, as *Chap. 13.* he maketh use of Kings to do his business, to persecute the Godly and to fight for him, as the former made use of their Legats and Officers who had no Crowns, *Chap. 12.* so both have Governours, in which their strength and help consisteth; but the last hath formal Kings to be his instruments. This then is the character, the last state, or head of the beast, shall have as large power as any of the former. but his Vassals shall be formally Kings, over whom he shall command as sovereignly, and of whom he shall make use as absolutely, as the former did of their servants. The term of *horns* being borrowed from beasts (as the whole Empire is compared to one beast) who by their horns push and hurt in their fightings.

2. Advert, that there is no affinity betwixt the ten horns mentioned here, and the ten horns mentioned, *Dan. 7. 24.* as there is no affinity betwixt these two beasts: For, first, That in *Daniel*, is an Empire, which is to vanish at, or before Christs first coming in the flesh. Compare *Dan. 7. 26.* with *Chap. 2. 44, 45.* these here get not their power till long after. 2. These in *Daniel* are successive kings of the same Kingdom, one coming after another, *ver. 24.* here they are contemporary, *ver. 12, 13.* These horns in *Daniel* are supream kings of that kingdom, which is there set out by the beast exercising that same power (the beast describing the kingdom complexly, and the horns the Kings separately, *ver. 24.*) but here, the beast is different from the horns now, when they are crowned, as it was before they got their Crowns. Hence they give their power to the beast, the beast is another King, in some respect superior to them, which is not so in *Daniel*, the beast there comprehendeth all these Kings. 4. There is there one little horn, which is last, peculiarly spoken of, whereof there is no mention here, so that either there are eleven horns, or there is a difference

among the ten, which is not here. 5. Add, that if that little horn were Antichrist, then the beast here were not Antichrist, seeing the beast and the horns differ; for, all the horns give power to the beast the seventh head, and if that little horn be Antichrist, he must do so also. 6. Here the beast Antichrist, is not posterior to the horns, nor any of the horns to it, or to one another: for, they are horns of the beast, and at the same time; there, that little horn cometh last, which sheweth they are not to represent one thing. Neither can it be said that that little horn there, and the beast here, are one: for, 1. That little horn hath not ten horns; for, he destroyeth three Kings, and seven are past; either then he must have but seven kings under him which are not destroyed or only three; for a difference there must be between the three destroyed and the other: and therefore there are not ten together. In a word, these ten horns set forth the Kingdom of Syria, or the *Seleucids* (of which stock came *Antiochus Epiphanes*, by whom the Jews suffered much) which was past before Christs birth. Thus the Papists by mixing these, do but endeavour to darken this Scripture, and obscure the true Antichrist. But it is clear they are not to be confounded: for these horns here do well agree with the beast, and for a time unanimously do all give their power to him; but (*Dan. 7. 24.*) that little horn destroyeth three before he come to his power. Beside, if that of the little horn were applied to Antichrist, then it would infer, that he destroyed the horns, whereas here the horns destroy him. Again, by that little horn (*Chap. 7. 23.*) is understood that little horn, *Chap. 8. 9.* and therefore by the last beast with the ten horns, out of which that little one ariseth, (*Chap. 7. 24.*) must be understood the same beast with the four horns, *Chap. 8.* seeing from it that little horn descendeth, as by comparing it with *ver. 23.* is clear.

More particularly, concerning these Kings, *Observe*, 1. That they are not personally or individually to be understood, as if it were so many kings in one generation only; for, these kings, thus characterized, take in all the ages since kingdoms arose out of the Empire: which in *Johns* time was subject to it, at least when in a considerable number they assumed dominion, and sovereignty to themselves: for, the Empire in *Johns* time, while these kingdoms were not, is clearly distinguished from that time and head or supream Governour, when these kingdoms were to come, as having another face of an Empire on it. Therefore seeing these kingdoms have had their rise long since out of that Empire, and somethings concerning them being yet to be fulfilled, It must take in more ages than one; for all that time is but counted one state of that Dominion, belonging to that one last head, and opposed by these horns to the former.

2. *Observe*, That they are kingdoms of some bounds of the Empire, horns now that are kings, which before were horns without

without crowns under the sixth head in *John's* time, and after yeelded willingly to the seventh.

3. *Obj.* That it is not necessary we understand it of a succession directly in that same line, so that it must be that same Kings stock, and that same People of a Kingdom, who must hate the whore, that first took to themselves sovereignty, and gave their power to the beast. It is enough that they occupy these same places and bounds, though not in that line, as all Emperours before, how-ever they succeeded, they come in under one King, and are typified by one head, if they came to that seat of Rome.

Thus then by horns that this last beast hath, understand so many Kings, wherewith, as so many horns, he shall push, as these did in *Dan.* 8. So here, (*ver.* 14.) they make war, which is the beasts own war, prosecuted by them, *Chap.* 13.

The first thing in the horns or Kings, is, their number, *ten*: for understanding whereof, it is not necessary, that peremptorily that number be stuck to, as if so many and no more behoved to be (for, they are not so circumstantiated as the seven Governments) it may be so many special horns who shall rise, and be especially serviceable to the beast, and instrumental in his ruine, though there may be more less observable, as *Dan.* 8. 8. the goat had four notable horns, because they were chief, though there was some little petty Governments beside these four of *Seleucus* in *Assyria*, *Ptolemie* in *Egypt*, *Cassander*, or *Antipater* in *Macedonia*, or *Grecia*, *Antigonus* in *Asia* the less, which is called *Anatolia*, corruptly *Natolia*. Besides these, there was one of *Thracia*, whose King was *Lysimachus* (to passe eight more that minted at the Kingdom) he continued forty years. 2. They may signifie this much, that this seventh head should have as many horns as the sixth, and that though Kings should start out from the Emperours Dominion, yet the last Government should not the less be strong by them. 3. It may be *ten*, to shew, that in all tossings of Kingdoms, these divided Kingdoms, once separated from the Empire, should continue, and be almost about that number of *ten*, as at the first they were. They are thus reckoned out by *Mede*, in *Apoc.* 8. under the second trumpet, to wit, 1. of *Brittons*. 2. of *Saxons*. both in *Britain*. 3. of *Franks* in *Gallia Belgica*. 4. of *Burgundians*. in *Gallia Celtica*. 5. of *Vicigoths*, in *Gallia Aquitana*, and part of *Spain*. 6. *Suevorum* and *Alanorum*, where *Portugal* is now. 7. *Vandals* in *Africa*. 8. *Almans* in *Germany*. 9. *Ostrogoths* in *Hungaria*. 10. of *Greeks* in the East. This was Anno 455. or 460. since which time the Empire hath continued divided: and though some Nations have changed their seats, yet the number hath never been less: and by this also it appeareth that neither *Grecia*, nor *Germany* from this forth (being but parts, as other Provinces, and having no interest in *Rome*) are to be accounted heads, but horns with the others.

The second character (or first, if we count not the number one) of these ten Kings, is from their present condition in *John's* time. They had received no power or kingdom as yet; for then they were under the Emperours civil Government, and were not called Kingdoms, but Provinces; they had not gotten their crowns: whereby it appeareth they are to rise of that Empire, implying, 1. that this Empire was to be weakened, and that many were to withdraw their temporal subjection from it. 2. It implyeth that that belonged to the last Government of that Empire (these horns then are to be Kingdoms, which were before Provinces) which is inconsistent with that head that then was, 3. They are described by their attaining Government, set out, 1. in its shortness, *an hour*, that is, during the short time of the seventh head they must continue: for they are contemporary with him. This sheweth, that though there be changes in Governments, none is long. 2. This power is contemporary with the beast, *it is*

one hour with the beast, that is, the beast that was, and is not, which is the last head. The meaning is, they shall be in the time of the seventh head his coming to an height; as he groweth up to be an head, and to heal the former wound, *Chap.* 13. so shall they grow up to be horns to him, and so continue during his absolute dominion. In a word, they are such Kings, as were not under the sixth head, so that when we see such horns, we may know what head they grow from. They were horns before to the former head, but they are crowned horns to this. 4. They are described by the manner of their becoming horns to the beast, *ver.* 13. in two, that is, *They shall willingly give their power and strength to this beast*, which is the eight, *ver.* 11. They were before kept under by force unto the sixth head; now, this is the difference, they shall give it, even though they have temporal dependance on none, yet shall they willingly be at the disposal of this last Government, and be devoted to it, as much as to the former. 2. They shall do this unaniously, *They shall have one mind* to it, so that though many provinces shall become kingdoms, yet all of them shall joyn upon another account to further, by their power and strength, the will and greatness of this last head, or King, as if they were horns to him: and by this we may see wherefore they are called horns, it is because this beast hath the use and command of their power and force, and they become horns, not as Kings, or when they become Kings, but when they give their power to him, and as they grow, as it were, out of his head.

5. They are set out by the particular wherein especially their power shall be exercised, and wherein he shall especially employ them, *They shall make war with the Lamb*: all the heads, under whatsoever form, are blasphemous, and so all the horns crowned or uncrowned, are instruments of persecution now as before. There is here, 1. their work, it is *warring*, that is, a direct (though not intended) opposing of *Jesus Christ*, His Truth, Gospel or People, and upon the matter, a contrarying of Him (whatever they thought) as *Paul* did, *Act.* 9. and the Scribes and Pharisees, *Act.* 5. fought against God, by intention of their work, though not of the workers. 2. Consider the object of it, it is the Lamb; *Chap.* 11. His Prophets are foughten with; *Chap.* 12. the woman and her seed, that kept the Commandments of God; *Chap.* 13. it's the Saints; and *Chap.* 16. it's Gods servants. Here the Lamb, to shew how Christ is foughten against, and what it is, it's in His Ministers, Members and Servants, as *Paul* persecuted Him, *Act.* 9. for all is one: *Michael* (*Chap.* 12.) and the Woman, have common wars and enemies; He with His Ministers, Saints and Servants are one Christ, *1 Cor.* 12. 3. Consider the actors, it is these, i. e. the horns: *Chap.* 12. 7. It was the devil and his angels; *Chap.* 11. and 13. it is the beast, that is, the head: and *Chap.* 18. 24. there the bloud is found in the where here it is the horns. All concur, and share both in the sin and judgment, but diversly, The devil is the fountain and root that this enmity floweth from, the beast is his special Lieutenant and General; the horns are the more immediate actors, by which the beast pusheth; the whore not only concurrerth, but she bloweth the hatred, and pusheth on by advices, laws and edicts, though she as an ecclesiastick body put none to death her self, yet doth she put the horns to it, who are her immediate executioners. This then is a character of these Kings who shall give their power to the beast, they shall persecute Christ's true Church for a long time in favours of the whore and beast.

The last word added, is concerning the success, the victory is on the Lamb's side, and the reasons are subjoyned. He is victor in His Members and Cause, these three wayes, as *Chap.* 12. 1. When in their sufferings they continue steadfast and overcome, even to the outwearing of the persecutors by their patience, who are more distressed and overcome in a long than the other in suffering. 2. He overcometh by keeping Truth and a



Church in the world in the despite of them, that the Prophets end their testimony in despite of them, and the Church spreadeth and multiplieth, even under them, as under *Diocletian, &c.* 3. He overcometh by bringing sad judgements on His persecutors, and bringing His Church through, and setting up the Witnesses, as *Chap. 11.* when they seemed lowest, and by making the world subject to the Gospel in end, either by moving them to yeeld, or by crushing them, and restraining them from doing any hurt to it, He thus prevail-eth.

The reasons added to confirm us of the certainty of the victory, that it cannot be otherwise, are from two grounds, 1. From the excellency of the Captain, He hath no equal: for He (even this Lamb) is *Lord of lords, and King of kings*, words setting forth especially His Godhead, in three, 1. His soveraignty and absolute dominion over all. 2. His power, being able to command all: none so great a King as He. 3. His right; for, justice is on His side: These titles agree to Christ properly as God, so *Chap. 19.* and yet as Mediator in some respect: for the behoof of His Church, He is made head over all things, *Eph. 1. 22.* and hath all power over all, not as over the Elect, who are in a peculiar way committed to Him, but in a deputation for their cause and good; He hath a delegated power as Mediator, to restrain, punish, raise up or cast down Kings, or Kingdoms in the world, as He thinketh meet. The first is essential to Him as God, the second voluntary, and given to Him as Mediator.

The second reason is from the nature of His Warriours or Army, none such are in the world, they are such Souldiers as are all Saints. 1. *Called*, that is, effectually so, from the estate of nature to grace, and so sanctified. 2. *Chosen*; they are both chosen comparatively, and chosen and made use of by Him, to be for the glory of His grace, and therefore cannot be overcome by any power, but be conquerors. 3. They are *faithfull*; honest at the heart and real in His service, which is an effect of the former two, they stick constantly unto Him; which sheweth wherein their victory most consisteth, that is, in their faith, 1. *Joh. 5. 4.* though even in suffering, yet they quit Him not: These are excellent qualifications. Now, if it be asked, If there be none other on Christ's side but such, what shall be accounted of all hypocrites, though formal professors? *Ans.* 1. They may be for Christ in one thing, as in a point of truth, yet against Him in the end; they are not for His glory, therefore are not on His side; for, he that is not so with Him, is against Him. 2. All unrenewed men are Christ's enemies, and though they sometimes, in some particular, side, or seem to side with Christ, yet it is not done as service to Him, as in *Judas* who followed Him for the bag, and those that preached Him out of envie, *Philip. 1. 15.* yet are they but serving themselves and not Christ, and will be ready to do Him an affront when it serveth their purpose, as *Judas* did. He hath no followers indeed, but where grace maketh them, nor will He count men by their practice, but by their ends and motives. Neither can one be faithful to the end, but one that is called and chosen: others are one time or another utterly foyled to the shame of their profession, and He will own none such as Souldiers to Him.

Before we come to the application, two things would be cleared, 1. If this prophesie be fulfilled? 2. how it is fulfilled? or, when? and much businesse is here made by Papists, who make their main demonstrations from this, that Antichrist is not yet come, because, say they, this is not fulfilled.

1. That this is fulfilled may be evidenced thus. *Arg. 1.* If these Provinces that were in *Johns* time without Kings, be now Kingdoms, having their own Governments, without any dependance on the *Roman* Empire, Then this prophesie is fulfilled; But the first in experience, is truth: look through all the

Nations that were Provinces then, not one of them is subject to the *Roman* Emperour now (save it be *Germany* alone, which yet indeed is not so) but all have their several independent Kings now of a long time.

The connexion of the *Major* may be made out, thus, That change that hath since come upon the *Roman* Empire, and the up-setting of these many new Kingdoms and Kings, which had no Kingdom then, is either no change at all, but consistent with the head that then was; or, it is some other change than is held forth in this prophesie; or, thirdly, it is the very same spoken of here; But neither of the first two can be said: not the first, that the Empire is the same now that it was then, for, the spirit putteth a clear difference betwixt this last state, (*Chap. 13.*) and the first under Emperours, That in the first the heads were Crowned, here, the horns; and if there be not difference betwixt Provinces subject to one Empire that ruleth over them all, and Provinces made Kingdoms ruling within themselves without any dependance on that head, there is difference in nothing, (for, Kings cannot be horns to the Emperours, seeing they act not for him, but for another: thus the Civil head hath the crown on the head, not on the horns; the Ecclesiastick head hath them on the horns, it is consistent with it to have Soveraignes for his vassals, which cannot be in a civil state: for so either the Kings were not free in civilibus, or the Governour that were the head, should have no power over them) and so one Empire in one bodie, and many Kingdoms in distinct bodies, cannot be one. Neither can the second be said, that that change on the Provinces or Kingdoms (here called *horns*) is an other beside this: for, there are but two states of these Nations, one then present, while they were subject to that temporal head, the other to come, in which they are to have Dominion of themselves. There is not, again, two states of their becoming Kings, but one, and the denying of the one inferreth the other. Thus the horns are either uncrowned, that is, subject to the *Roman* Empire; or, they are crowned, that is, have gotten a Kingdom, according to this prophesie; But they are not now in the first state, Therefore they must be taken in the last consideration. And as there is no head or Government intervening among the supream Governments, set out by heads, So must there be no intervening state of these Kingdoms admitted betwixt what then was, and the fulfilling of this, whereby their future state is set out.

*Arg. 2.* If the Kings now in being have the very characters mentioned here, Then they must be the fulfilling of this prophesie; But in event they answer it in all things. *Ergo.*

1. There are now many Kings, which were not in *Johns* time. 2. They are arisen out of the old Provinces of the *Roman* Empire. 3. They are under another head and Governour than was then in *Johns* time, and so contemporary with that which was to come. 4. They have all joyntly given their strength to be serviceable to the power, that is, the seventh head, which was then to come. 5. They have been making, for a long time, in all their Dominions, war with the Saints, Therefore this must be fulfilled, seeing all things prophesied have directly come to passe.

*Arg. 3.* It may be made out, thus, If the last Government of *Rome* be come, which is called the eight or seventh, Then this prophesie is fulfilled; for they (that is the last Government of *Rome*) and these ten Kings, are contemporary together, They receive power *one hour with the beast* and give it to him; and therefore the making out, that any of them is come, is the making out that both are come: But it is cleared before, and is clear also in it self, that he is come, thus, If that Government or Governour of *Rome* be come, to whom the separate Kings, that refuse temporal subjection to the Emperour, shall give joyntly their power and strength upon another account, Then the

the seventh and last Governour of Rome is come: for, that beast which they gave their power unto, is the beast which John saw in the vision (which *vers. 11. was then, is not, but was to come.*) But truth and experience telleth us, that another Governour sitteth now at Rome than sat in John's time, unto whom these Kings have given their power, Therefore the last Governour must be come; and so this prophesie, which is contemporary with it, must be fulfilled.

*Arg. 4.* This prophesie must either be fulfilled, or it is to be fulfilled; But, not the last, Therefore the former. If these Kings or Kingdoms be to arise, they must either rise out of the Kingdoms that now are separate, or out of that which is called the Empire; But neither of these can be. Not the first, beside that there is no warrant to expect a second revolution of those Kingdoms after the first, which this would infer. I say, secondly, they must arise to be in this consideration *horns* (to the beast) and Kings which were not Kings before: Now all these Provinces, having had this long time Kings, cannot then be looked on as the subject out of which these to come must arise. Beside, if there were a twofold arising of Kings out of the Empire, and the one not distinguished from the other, the arising of these ten Kings would not be a distinguishing character to discern this beast, and so to make him known by his horns, which yet is the scope here. And therefore this character of ten Kings, can agree to no other state or head, but this last.

Nor, 2. can it be out of the bounds of that now called the Empire: for, 1. there is not that extent of Dominion, as to furnish ten Kings, especially to make such a great dominion, as Antichrist is supposed to be, of all People, Tongues, and Nations. 2. If it were no broader, then Antichrist might and power by his horns would be no greater than what is now the Empire.

2. It appeareth, that such must be Kingdoms in this state as were Provinces before; (the horns are the same, or near the same, uncrowned or crowned) But *Germany* was never more Provinces than one, or at most two, (as was *France* and *Spain*) Therefore there is no proportionableness here to make ten crowned horns out of that which was but one, or at most two before. Beside, our reasoning is not only, that there are now so many Kings, but so many who act as horns to an other power, as the Provinces were wont to do, and they are not horns to these called Emperours, They must therefore be so to another head; and if so, then this prophesie is fulfilled.

The manner of fulfilling must be looked in these steps. 1. *Constantine*, after the heathens are cast down, removeth from Rome and leaveth that seat void, so after that he is not to be accounted an head, as is said on *Chap. 13.* 2. After that, *Anno 412. and 455.* the Barbarous Nations *Goths* and *Vandals*, did over-run the western Empire and seven times took Rome; by this the Empire is distracted, and several Provinces are either now become Kingdoms by the continuance of these Nations in them, or by others assuming supreme power over them without dependence on the Emperour. 3. During which time, this last head driveth his design of exalting himself and making an image of that Empire which was fallen. 4. By means mentioned, *Chap. 13. 12, &c.* all these Kings are brought to worship that beast, and receive his mark, more or lesse, as he arose, till he came to that height, to dispose of Kingdoms, ratifie elections under the title of *Αρχοντες του κοσμου* (as *Carion* observeth) unto which in time they came generally to submit, and accordingly possessed many of their Kingdoms. 5. When God had discovered him to be the Antichrist, some of those, who once had given their power to him, have withdrawn it, and we are to wait and pray for the fulfilling of this more, as the former of giving their power to him hath been already fulfilled.

Out of what is said, we would draw three sorts of uses. 1. From this, lay down some conclusions: and the first is, If this prophesie be fulfilled, then Antichrist is come, and not to be looked-for to come; for, if the horns be, then is the head, and if the head be, then is the beast, the one is not without the rest; But that is verified, *ut supra. Ergo.*

*Bellarmin de Roman. Pont. lib. 3. cap. 4. 5.* allegeth, that this is not yet fulfilled, because, saith he, the arising of these ten Kings supposeth a dividing among them of the Roman Empire wholly to its annihilating, which, saith he, is not yet done, seeing there is one who is called and acknowledged Roman Emperour. *Ergo.* Antichrist is not come seeing he is not removed out of the way, who then did let, 2 *Thess. 2.* as he expounds that place. *Ans.* There is a twofold removing of the Roman Emperour to be considered, 1. Wholly, in deed and in name, so as not to have so much as a shadow. 2. In deed, though not in name, yet full as to the removing of him from being head to that Empire which was, and so from being the sixth head, this far is necessary, for, two heads cannot be together, and so long as he stood as a head, he stood in the way, and was a let of the coming of the seventh; but that there shall be no name, that is not necessary: for, when the Emperours the sixth head came, Consuls were in name at Rome, but were not heads, because they wanted the former power, and were someway subject to another head, and therefore though the name of Emperour be, yet if he be not now head to that Empire, if the horns act not for him now, but acknowledge another head, then he is not head, if he have not that seat Rome, nor command nor that seven hilled city, he is not head, nor can he be who wanteth the horns. But that there be not the name of an Emperour (if he be not an head, but rather a horn, giving his power to this head or beast with the rest, and as useful to him as any) this far, the removing of the Empire out of the way is not necessary; But the former is: and that this is fulfilled, appeareth in three steps concurring to it. 1. That the blasphemy of the Roman Emperours, as such, is ceased. 2. That the seat of the Roman Empire is passed from Rome. 3. That the command of the Provinces (as it were his horns) is plucked from him: for, these three qualifications, (to wit, to have a name of blasphemies, to sit at Rome and to act the Provinces as horns) are necessary to a head of this beast. And that all these are removed from the Roman Emperour, is clear in experience, and granted by *Bellar. as lib. 3. de Pon. Rom. cap. 5.* and elsewhere. 1. That the Emperour hath no command over Rome, but that the Pope exerciseth there both Swords, Civil and Ecclesiastick, of a long time. 2. That the force of his power, or of that Empire, is also broken, he asserteth, *lib. 2. cap. 2. de Pontif.* (*Prædicit enim Johannes hanc Babylonem ruinuram, quia Romanum Imperium delendum erat, id quod jam fere factum esse cernimus: an non enim Gothi, Vandali, Longobardi Romane urbis Imperium fere ad nihilum redegerunt?*) proving Babylon here spoken of to be Rome, he giveth that for one reason, that it was brought down as is prophesied in this Chapter. If then by him the *Goths* invasion was the fulfilling of this prophesie in that part, Then an utter abolishing of the name of Emperour is not necessary; for then it was: and if that be the fulfilling of this prophesie and ruine which was to come, Then it is not now to come: and if that ruine be not the thing prophesied here, Then doth not that event contrabute to prove this *Babylon* to be Rome, on whom that event fell, which is yet *Bellarmin* scope, But indeed upon the matter, we will find this Emperour but an horn, what ever his name be, thus, 1. If he command but a Province of the Roman Empire, which was before subject to the Governours of Rome, and have no command at, or, over Rome, or any other Province, Then he is not an head, but an horn; But that is truth.



2. If he himself be acted by a power that now resideth at Rome, as other Kings are, Then he is but an horn to that head, and not an head himself; But that is clearly true in many experiments, whereby the Emperours have been commanded by Popes. See *Platina in vit. Greg. 9.* He comandeth Frederick the Emperour to go to War under pain of Excommunication; and this is after done: yea, in providence we will find no Province have more dependance on the Popes now of a long time. 1. They have deposed them, and transferred their Crowns. See in the life of *Greg. 7. Hildebrand.* 2. They have wasted their Lands; and the order of Election by Electors is attributed to them. 3. Particularly, their Election dependeth on their Ratification, & he is not Emperour, but King of the Romans till he approve it. Hence, in the Decretals it is said, *Papa habet potestatem à Christo, Imperator vero à Papa.* 4. They have employed their strength for the Popes, and for persecuting the Church, (as *Sigismund* in burning *John Husse, Hieronymus of Prague*) Therefore if they be horns, they are not heads, if an other be head and acknowledged by these Kings the horns, then the Emperour is cast off, and hath cast himself off from the dignity of being head and supream Governour of that Empire, which only was necessary. In a word, then the removing of the Roman Emperours from being head to these Kings, is necessary; for they cannot be horns to him and another beast also, and thus far it is fulfilled: But the burying altogether the name, which hath not, nor pretendeth to absolute power over these Kings as the former did, that is not necessary. And thus far the Emperours weaknesse and inability to head the beast, and the Popes Authority and Dominion to do it, is confirmed by what *Bellarmino* asserteth, *de Concil. lib. 1. cap. 12.* where (having laid it down as necessary, that the Popes must call general Councils, because only his Dominion is of that large extent) he addeth this last, *non potest hic, i. e. Imperator, vix cogere Episcopos unius provincie venire ad Concilium: nam neque Itali, Hispani aut Galli, Imperatori subiaciuntur, sed suos habent Reges aut Principes:* which is enough to clear what we assert: And in his 3. lib. *De translatione Imperii* It is his work to prove the Emperour to be the Popes vassel, as holding all his Authority from him: and indeed that this keepeth the name of an Empire, and which now is, it is meerly from their bulls and constitutions, If their stories be true.

A second conclusion we may draw from it, is this, that the Pope is Antichrist, thus, That supream power of Rome which shall govern it after the temporal Empire is broken, and the Provinces become Kingdoms, and to which these Kings shall give their power, and act in persecution of the Saints for his behove, That is Antichrist; But the Pope or Papacy is that power, that now since the fulfilling of this prophesie hath borne rule over Rome, and to whom these Kingdoms have given their power. Ergo, he is Antichrist: and this far it is fulfilled in him.

A third conclusion, is, that Rome under the Pope is the whorish Church here meant and set out, thus, That Rome which is supported by the beast with the ten horns Crowned, or to whom ten Kings that arise out of the Roman Empire give their power, after the Emperours cease to be an head to them That Rome, or Rome so considered, is the whore (for, the beast and the horns are contemporary, as the head out of which they grow, and the beast and the whore are contemporary, as the ryder and beast which carrieth her: if therefore the horns and beast be contemporary, so must the whore be with them also: for, *que convenient uni tertio convenient inter se;* But Rome, or the Romish Church, for these thousand years past, is the Rome governed and supported by that power, or beast, to whom these Kings have given, and, for a great part, do yet give their power. Therefore this Romish Church is the whorish antichristian Church described here. And that which *Bellar.* saith, *de*

*pontif. lib. 3. cap. 5.* confirmeth this, That these ten Kings (which to him are yet to arise) shall hate Rome and burn her, &c. for, what Rome shall they burn? Is it not Rome the whore, called so, *verf. 17.* Therefore it is not heathen Rome, but Popish Rome that is the whore, for, she is the whore whom they shall destroy; and when they shall destroy her, to wit, her, to whom for a time they have given their power, after they have withdrawn it from the Emperour who formerly had it.

A fourth conclusion, is, that Antichrist is no singular person, and is to continue longer than three years and an half, thus, If that beast or power, to which the Kings that have received Power and Kingdoms out of these Provinces, which were once subject to the Roman Empire, shall give their power, be Antichrist, Then he is no single person, or of short continuance (the connexion is clear from this, because that Power or Government, which hath these Kings for horns, hath already descended for many ages, and through many generations, and there remaineth yet somethings to be fulfilled before the final overthrow thereof;) But the former is truth, that beast is Antichrist. Ergo. Or thus, If the seventh head that succeeded to that Government of the Roman Empire (which was in *John's* time, and acteth the Kings that have since gotten power) be for moe generations than one or two, Then Antichrist is not of so short continuance; Neither is that defection, whereof he is head, so soon to passe, (for, Antichrist is that last Government) But experience telleth the former is true, that another power than what was in *John's* time hath sitten at Rome, and ruleth it and acteth these Kings that once were of it for moe ages than one. Ergo. &c.

A second sort of uses, are, to retort or wipe away some objections of *Bellar.* against this, whereby he would prove that Antichrist is not yet come, and therefore that the Pope is not to be accounted this head, for, this is the surest way for them to guard him, for no other can be imagined to be here understood but he, if he be come. 1. He doth therefore lay down six demonstrations (as he calleth them) to make out this, that Antichrist is not yet come. The first (*lib. 3. de pontif. cap. 4. s. &c.*) is this, The Gospel hath not as yet been preached through all the world, which (saith he) must be, before Antichrist come. Therefore he is not come, the place cited, is, *Matth. 24. 14.* *Ans.* This goeth upon a twofold supposition. 1. That all the world is to be taken there collectively, i. e. for every Nation, and not distributively, i. e. for many, or most of Nations, as is usual. So *Rom. 11.* their sound is gone to the ends of the earth. The second is, that it supponeth that (whatever it be) to be spoken in reference to Antichrists coming, which is expressly spoken of in reference to Christs second coming (which is long after Antichrist) or before the end of *Jerusalem*; which two ends are only spoken of there.

His second demonstration, which is the main, is taken from that, that the Roman Empire by Antichrist or before him is utterly to be abolished, 2 *Thess. 2.* so he that letteth must be taken out of the way; but, saith he, this is not done. *Ans.* ut *supra*, conclusion, 1. The Roman Emperour must be taken from sitting at Rome, and from governing over the Provinces as an head of that Empire; that is granted: that is, the sixth head must be removed out of the way, before Antichrist the seventh come; But that is done long since. There is no Emperour at Rome, nor that hath any dominion there, nor hath any horns or Kingdoms now under him; he is therefore no head to this beast, Therefore this will not prove that he is not come: for, it is one thing to be called a Roman Emperour, another to be indeed a head to this Empire, as it is represented by this beast; this must head the seven hilled City, governed over the Provinces, as

having so many horns to serve him, and have names of blasphemy upon them; whoever sitteth at Rome thus qualified, whatever his name be, he is head: for, we try the changes of these heads, neither by name only, nor by the seat only, but by the thing, that is, by power and dominion over these Provinces, exercised from Rome as the principal seat of that Government: and although the want of Rome will not prove one not to be an Emperour (which is *Bellarmines* argument,) yet the want of it, will prove him to be none of the heads here represented, even as the having of Rome, will not infer it, except there be also Dominion over the Provinces, (for which cause we did formerly deny the application of this to the Gothish Kings) Now, it being clear in itself, that the Emperours power extendeth neither to Rome the head, nor to the Provinces the body of that Empire; and it being clear also, that both these agree to the Pope (though upon a different account, as the place formerly cited from *Bellarmino de Con. lib. 1. cap. 12.* confirmeth) It must therefore follow, that the Emperour, notwithstanding of the name, is not to be accounted head, but the Pope, who possesseth the thing.

His third demonstration, is, that the two witnesses, *Enoch* and *Elias*, are not come, who must prophesie under Antichrist and be killed by him, as *Chap. 11.* *Ans.* Beside what is said there to that fable, it is confuted here, thus, These are the witnesses that testifie against Antichrist and suffer by him all the time of his reign (as *vers. 6.* they are *Martyres, &c.*) But many since his appearing have testified against him, and suffered under him, Therefore they, and not *Enoch* and *Elias*, are the witnesses intended; and so they are not to be looked for.

His fourth demonstration, is refuted by this also, Antichrist, saith he, shall raise great persecution, but that great persecution hath not come as yet; for these that suffer by the Pope are but few, and by one punishment, to wit. fire. *Ans.* If this of the Kings making of war against the Saints be fulfilled; Then that persecution is fulfilled; But that is cleared to be fulfilled, *Chap. 13.* by the Pope and his horns.

For the greatness of a persecution, we may consider it in these four, 1. In the cause wherefore, when not only the full omitting of truth, but the least opposition to error or abstaining from their idolatry, or countenancing or performing any allowed duty, is a ground of persecution, that is a great persecution, but never were there less causes laid hold on than have been by the Papists and Popish Kings, as the having of a New Testament in a known tongue, questioning any of their ceremonies, eating flesh in Lent, yea, not answering clearly to their questions, witness the rules of inquisition of *Charles* the fifth, his Edict, and *Francis* the first his, with all their proceeding in *Germany, England, France, &c.* 2. We may consider a great persecution in the effects of it, that is, the number and kind of these persecuted. Hath there been more than in the Wars of *Bohemia*, against the *Waldenses*; in *Holland, England, France, &c.* against old and young, women and sucking children, sick, Ministers, Judges, &c? *Bellarmino* himself, *de notis Ecclesie, lib. 4. cap. 18.* reckoneth 10000 *Waldenses* slain at one time, and many battels whereiu alway (saith he) Papists prevailed. 3. If we consider persecution in respect of the cruel acts of it, can there be more and greater than the bloody massacre in *France*, the fifty thousand that were put to death in *Holland*; cities burned? &c. Read that sentence of the Parliament at *Aix* in *France*, executed by the lord *Oped* against *Merindol* and others in *Province*, as *Slidan* hath it, *lib. 13. & 16.* what hath the Inquisition done? the King of *Spain* to cut off his own Son, and

*Philip* the second the Confessor of his Father *Charles* the fifth, and burning him when he was dead (as is usual to them) breaking faith, from thirsting after their blood, as at *Constance* in the case of *Jerom* of *Prague* and *John Huss*? when the Emperor had given a safe conduct, what horrible cruelties and villanies have been used, casting their dead bodies on the ground, abusing women, spoiling, banishing, starving, and tormenting, is known to these who have read that history of the Persecutions? 4. It is great in respect of the heat and malice it cometh from, and is to be reckoned by that: if they put few to death, it is either because they know them not, or were by God and external causes restrained: but their attempts and laws (as that of *Alphonse* his making of it treason to deny the Pope or converse with a *Lollard*) bulls, incitements and promises to engage others to destroy Protestants, do hold out their humour. Now, laying all these together, we will find no persecution hath been longer, sorer, or more cruel than this. This demonstration therefore is full, and proveth him come, as all the rest, and may be retorted, If this persecution be fulfilled, then he is come. More may be seen on *Chap. 13.*

The fifth and sixth demonstrations are also found faulty by this; the fifth, asserting that Antichrist is but to continue such a short time, three years and an half, and the sixth, that the end of the world is to come, forty five dayes after his ruine: both which are false; not only from what is said, but from this, that this prophesie holdeth forth sundry things to be done after his ruine, which in such a time cannot be done; yea, all these thousand years, *Chap. 20.* are after his begun height. See, *Ch. p. 20. vers. 4.* and therefore his time is not to be of so short continuance. And if that reckoning were true, then at that time any that could count Antichrists rise or end (which to them is palpable) might know the precise end of the world before it came, which is false: and whereas he, *lib. 3. cap. 8. de Pontif.* maketh the continuance of Antichrist longer than the preaching of the two witnesses, to reconcile that of *Dan. 12.* of 1290. dayes, (which ignorantly he applyeth to Antichrist; it is manifestly false: for, the term of forty two moneths, is (*Chap. 13.*) set to the beast, as 1260. dayes are to the Prophets, the one is bounded with the other: therefore that place belongeth not to this. Beside, if he continue a month longer, (as that cometh maketh him) then it should not be just three years and an half; and so themselves add a month more, and break the time which they call definite.

Thus these demonstrations rightly followed, will not only make out, that the Antichrist is come, but that the Pope is he.

A third sort of uses are practical. And, 1. see here the changes of Kingdoms and the shortness of them, and Gods sovereignty in timing them and stirring them, even those who are most opposit to Him. 2. Our Lord, the Lamb (*vers. 14.*) is an excellent and glorious person: it becometh us to have high thoughts of Him, to tremble before Him, and to be comforted in Him. 3. It is comfortable that this person owneth His People, so that they have common causes, friends and adversaries, He and the Chosen are on one side. 4. Our Lord Jesus getteth always the victory, the side He is on loseth never in the end; and as to His end, what ever it seem to be before men, it is good to be on the Lamb's side, the victory there only is sure. 5. The weight of the victory lyeth on Christs concurrence, because He is on that side: He is the great Captain, by whose conduct the victory is allannerly attained; His Souldiers need not fight, but stand and behold His salvation, as *Chap. 19.* they follow in white, not fighting but triumphing; It is the Lamb that overcometh all enemies, and therefore only is armed.



## LECTURE VI.

Verf. 15. *And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.*

16. *And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate, and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.*

17. *For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.*

18. *And the woman which thou sawest, is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*

**T**He Angel, having described the beast, proceedeth to interpret the *woman*, which was the other part of the vision, *vers. 3.* and of the Angel's undertaking, *vers. 7.*

This *woman* is described by three things. 1. By her greatness, *vers. 15.* 2. By her ruine, *vers. 16, 17.* 3. By a more particular character from her present state, and the state of the world then, she is a city that ruleth over them, *vers. 18.* The first expoundeth that (*vers. 1.*) of *many waters*. The second, her judgment, which he undertook. The third pointeth her out (as it were) with the finger. Other circumstances of colour, &c. are clear from the scope, and need no interpretation, Therefore are omitted.

The woman (which is called a *City*, *vers. 18.*) hath her seat on *many waters*, *vers. 1.* that is, not on floods, saith the Angel, but *they are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues*, that is, many and diverse Nations, and a large dominion: She is said to sit on these, not as she sat in a peculiar manner on the seven hills; But. 1. by commanding and ordering these; It is called (*vers. 18.*) *a ruling over the kings of the earth.* 2. By her gathering treasures and stores from these, whereby the pomp and greatness of that City is supported. 3. She maketh use of them for upholding of her pomp; and this is applied to a *City*, because her rulers that sit in her, did so command, and it was by their commanding and ruling, that this affluence did redound to her, and because the special supreme Court sitteth there, as it is said of *Babylon*, that she *dwelleth on many waters*, *Jer. 51. 13.* which is expounded in part in the following words, by her *abounding in treasures*. People and Nations are compared to *waters*, 1. In that they are of a flowing, changeable unstable nature like water, *Gen. 49.* And, 2. in that they are an unsure, though a promising-like ground to build a State upon: *Babylon* hath these, that is, many Nations for her foundation.

The second character, is the ruine of this whore, which is set forth in these three things, *vers. 16.* and confirmed by the anticipating of an objection, *vers. 17.*

1. This ruine is set out in the degrees and greatness of it, *They shall hate her, make her desolate, naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire*: which words shew not only indignation at her in the instruments, but hold out the particular steps it should proceed by. 1. To *hate her*; the love and respect that once they bare to her shall now be turned to hatred, as is ordinary after lusts, as in *Amnon* to his sister *Tamar*. 2. They make her *desolate and naked*, that is, discover her shame, and withdraw their former supply, whereby she was supported in her pomp. 3. By executing judgments in a most vindictive and horrible manner, *eating her flesh, and burning her with fire*, which importeth her utter ruine.

2. This ruine is set out by the actors in it, to wit, the *ten Kings*, formerly described and set out by *ten horns*, even those who once committed fornication with her, and did partake in her sin; These, or some of these (as it is said of the thieves that were crucified with Christ, they cast the same in His teeth, *i. e.* one of them) shall be the performers of this judgment: for, some of them continue to lament her ruine, *Chap. 18.*

3. The time when they shall do it, is implied to be *after they had given their power a long time to the beast*, and committed fornication with this whore, they shall begin to withdraw from her, and perform this execution on her. This is gathered, 1. from the series of the story; These ten Kings, first, when they got Kingdoms, gave their power to the beast, and make war with the Lamb, at that time they love the whore and do sin with her; But, afterward they change and withdraw: for, it is not done in the time of their giving power to the beast (for, they cannot give their power to the beast which supporteth the whore, and make desolate the whore that the beast supporteth, at one time) Neither do they fight with the Lamb and whore at one time, but when God draweth them from their first practice of adoring this whore, with whom at first the Kings did commit fornication, then this is done. 2. It is drawn from the 17. verse, wherein these Kings, in giving their power to the beast, are limited unto that time in which God shall have performed His Word, of this whores deluding the world, and then He who put that agreement in their hearts to the one, is to make the alteration and change to the other.

The confirmation of this, or the anticipation, is, *vers. 17.* where it may be objected, How can these Kings be instrumental in her ruine? Are they not slaves to the beast? and hath not the beast and she one standing, so that who sustaineth the one, must also sustain the other? Or, how can it be expected, that they who have been so long, and so much drunk with her fornications, shall after this abandon her?

The Angel, removing the objection, addeth a confirmation, thus, It is true, they shall give their power jointly to the beast; but, 1. that is not for ever, but *till Gods word be fulfilled*, which is the word of the great spiritual delusion that was to come, 2 *Thess. 2.* during Antichrists height, and his continuation for so long a time, but no longer, when that is fulfilled, the case will alter, as the word *until* (*Gen. 49. 10.*) implyeth the removing the Scepter from *Judah* then; so this *until*, importeth a change when the prophecies foresaid are fulfilled. 2. That giving of such a joyned power willingly, is not by accident, nor is it of it self ordinary for so many Kings to give their power to an other: but, saith he, even this of God; who in His secret wisdom and justice, that He may bring about what He hath determined on an unthankful world, and might punish both Kings

and others, that received not the Truth, and received it not with love, 2. *Thes.* 2. Thus far He gave up and shall give up these Kings to that delusion, so to do till His spiritual plagues be at an end. And He that made them so extraordinarily do the one, can, and will make them also do the other: And therefore as we have seen the one part fulfilled, to wit, Gods putting it in their hearts, thus to agree to be his slaves; so may we be confirmed to expect the other, and take the one as a pledge of the other, (though it be unlikely) that is, that the ruine of Antichrist and Rome then, (which is the object of the fifth vial) shall be by that part of the World, Kings and Nations over which he longest had his dominion. By which it is clear. 1. that Rome's fall is by such Kings (or those who by Gods providence shall be Rulers in these parts) it is not unlikely also, of these races or lines that have been deluded, because in that, Gods power (who swayeth Kings to love or hatred as He pleaseth, *Prov.* 21. 1.) is most remarkable thus, and their remembrance of their former delusion wakeneth that hatred most. 2. It is clear also that that ruine is after partaking of her sin. 3. That sinning with Antichrist is a spiritual plague and judicial stroke from the Lord. And it would look otherwise exceeding mad and irrational-like to consider what slavery many Kings, Emperours, &c. have been put unto by Popes, if the Lords righteous judgment be not considered; which sheweth the rise of this delusion. 4. That the Lord hath a special hand in executing spiritual plagues as well as bodily. This as here it is set down is sinful, and the Elect are kepted from it, *ver.* 8. and it is called committing fornication spiritually, yet the Lord putteth it in their hearts. There is more here than a bare permission, He giveth up to a reprobate mind (*Rom.* 1. 26.) those that abuse natures light, and so to delusion (*2 Thes.* 2.) those who abuse the light of the Gospel, which is as a plague inflicted by His justice; and till it be at an end, there is no off-bringing of these Kings untill He do it, who putteth them on. This His will is fulfilled, 1. In punishing the world by this Antichristian whore till she be at an height, 2. In punishing her, in both which, these Kings are instrumental, and He overruleth them in both, but diversly: In the last, which is good, He formally inclineth them to it, and effecteth it: In the former, which is evil, 1. in His providence He not only suffereth such objects and temptations as induce to that slavery to occur, but actively bringeth about many things in outward dispensations, which being of themselves good, are yet stumbled on by them in their corruption, so as they are furthered thereby in this enterprize. 2. He withdraweth grace, courage or means, to oppose that temptation, and so they yeeld. 3. He overruleth their blindness and corruption, so as to accept of, and follow this temptation rather than another, and suffereth it to come to such an height, and at such a time, and not at any other. 4. As they would not be subject to Him, so He giveth them up, and judicially (as that slavery is a punishment) hardeneth them and dementeth them in that subjection (as *Nebuchadnezzar* was put to live with beasts) and giveth them up to the hand of that delusion, as to an executioner of His justice, till what He intended be accomplished. If it be objected that this, to give their power to the beast, is sinfull, and therefore cannot be attributed to God. *Hugo Card.* answereth, That it is pleasing to God, not of it self, but by reason of its consequents, to wit, the many advantages that He bringeth out of their malice.

The last thing whereby the woman, or whore, is described, is by her present dominion: It is (saith the Angel) that great city that beareth rule over the Kings of the earth. Where, 1. this woman is, that is, representeth a City or Town literally and properly so, even as in the Angels exposition horns are Kings, beads are Hills, and Candlesticks are Churches, *Chap.* 1. &c. for, the Angel being now to close the characters, he giveth the clearest last, thereby to difference this city from all others,

which is the scope. 2. It is that great city, that city which for greatness, power, splendor and dominion, was then eminent amongst all the cities of the earth, from which, others, in all places, thought it a privilege to be called citizens (especially in *Judea*) to wit, Rome, filled alway with the epithet Great, or that Great, &c. pointing out a singular city, known for eminency to be so. 3. It is more particularly characterized by its present condition, It is the city that ruleth, in the present time, not only over Provinces and common subjects, as *ver.* 15. but over Kings, deposing, forfeiting, making and unmaking, at their pleasure, Kings and Tetrarchs; and that not any great city, but that city which most singularly was acknowledged to be so: which words set out some city eminent for a present, large, ample and sovereign dominion beyond ordinary, in this time when *John* wrote: which, by these characters, joyned with the former, and the Angels scope, (which is to make this whore known to *John*) maketh evident that Rome is hereby designed, being that city, which, in its Governours, and by its Authority, then ruled over all the world (as it was called, for its greatness, *orbis Romanus*) See *Luk.* 2. 1, 2. *Augustus* commanded all the world to be taxed. At this time sent they Armies through *Europe* (almost all) and a great part of *Asia* and *Africa*, as they did their Proconsuls, Governours and Legats in their name: for, the Emper, after *Augustus* untill *Trajan*, was in its greatest height, during which time, to wit, in *Domitians* dayes that preceeded *Trajan*, *John* saw this vision. At that time they used to put up Kings, and transfer Kingdoms, as they did *Herod the great*, *Matth.* 2. and *Herod the Tetrarch*, *Luk.* 3. *Agrippa*, *Act.* 24. beside what is recorded in humane histories. So that no King about them durst declare an heir or successor, but by their consent, or prosecute any war but as they permitted. But sometimes they would make a word make the greatest Kings desist, as *C. Popilius Lenas* his word to *Antiochus* lying at *Alexandria*, when he had required him to cease from that war in name of the Romans; and when *Antiochus* said he would advise, he drew a line about him, and commanded him to answer before he passed it, which he did and removed.

From what is said, we conceive it clear, that all these characters do evidence Rome to be this city, and that it cannot be a city figuratively taken for a multitude of wicked. The adversaries (ut supra) have confessed it, *Left.* 1. For it is called a city in the Angels interpretation (which must be properly taken) it is qualified by such circumstances as difference it from other cities, and pointeth it out to be properly applied, as a distinct city from other Nations of the wicked over whom she commandeth, and so must be Rome.

2. That by this apostasie or whore, causing others to drink of her fornications, also is understood the grand apostasie or falling away under Antichrist, *2 Thes.* 2. or the antichristian Kingdom (at least the chief seat thereof) cannot be denied, seeing it is the most singular defection that was then to come, (such as Antichrists is) and such a defection as is supported by this beast, whom all adversaries acknowledge to be Antichrist. Therefore that defection is corruptly applied by *Bellar.* to the Jews rejecting of Christ, which preceeded *Paul's* writing of that: for, 1. he speaketh of it as a falling away yet then to come; otherwise his argument, that the day of Judgement was not so near, because that was not come, would be of no force. 2. He speaketh of it as a falling away, which supponeth them once to have had the profession of Christianity. 3. He extendeth it to be universal upon all that received, (not the profession of the Truth) but received not the love of the Truth. 4. That it hath special relation to Rome, his expressing the Roman Empire, as that which then letted, (and that under an obscure name) doth evince; and what can that delusion then else be, but what is admiration here? they must therefore both



relate to the same antichristian defection, being there are not two but one.

Here it is also clear, that this beast (in the last notion, to wit, the Ecclesiastick) is the Antichrist: for, he is the head of this great defection, and supporter to it, and supreme ruler of this apostatizing dominion, which earagrees to none other, but to him: and (ver. 11.) he is *alvus*, an eminent person or succession of persons as the rest, as he is called *o antixristos* elsewhere.

The scope being then, 1. to point out Antichrist: and, 2. his Kingdom, or whorish Church, or Congregation, Out of all that is said, we may, by resuming these characters, gather these two conclusions.

1. That the Church of *Rome*, for these many years past, hath been, and presently is the whorish Church aimed at here, and Antichrist's seat and kingdom. 2. That the Pope, or who possesseth the Papacy in his complex dominion, is the very Antichrist particularly characterized here.

The making out one of these, maketh out both, they are so linked together: for, if the beast represent the Pope, Then certainly the whore must be that Church, which is supported by him, and whereof he is head, & *contra*; if *Rome* be the whore, he that is head to her, must be this beast and Antichrist. I shall make out both by resuming the characters and properties applyed to both, thus, If the characters be such that are given to this beast, as are peculiar to Antichrist; or, if the properties whereby this woman is described, be such as are peculiar to his Kingdom; Then the Pope is Antichrist, and the Romish Church the Antichristian Church and his Kingdom: because (which is the reason of the connexion) all these agree only to them; But the first is truth. *Ergo*. Or, if all these characters, spoken and prophesied of concerning this beast and whore, do belong to, and be fulfilled in, the Papacie and the Romish Church, Then is he Antichrist, and she the Antichristian Kingdom; But that these properties agree, and are to be applyed to them, may be made out, 1. by induction and recapitulation of the properties themselves which belong to Antichrist and his Church severally. Then, 2. By pointing out the time or state in which they are applicable to them.

Antichrist getteth these characters here, 1. That he shall be a *Roman* Governour, and govern the seven hilled city, and that many Nations and Kingdoms of the earth beside shall give him reverence, ver. 7. Compare ver. 8, 9, 10, and 11: 2. That he was not then in being in *Johns* time, ver. 8. 3. That he was to succeed to that Government which then was, to wit, the Emperours and *Cesars* at *Rome*, ver. 10. 4. That he was not to have any new state of Empire, but to continue that which was, but in an other form, ver. 9. Therefore was he, in some respect, before *Johns* time, ver. 8. 4. Though he be to succeed to the six Governments, and in some respect (as to the absoluteness and seat of his Dominions) is to be one body with the *Roman* Empire, yet is he not to be so upon a Civil account, but on an Ecclesiastick, in which respect he is an other, not yet come, getting admiration, or adoration, having Kings under him, who hath absolute temporal power of themselves, which they could not have, were he a civil Prince, ver. 8, 9, 10. So this Empire is two beasts on this ground, and the last head two in this respect, yet indeed but one. 6. This Antichrist is too much revered, and that in more than an ordinary civil worship, ver. 8. 7. He shall be no ordinary civil power, nor warranted Ecclesiastick power, neither in name nor thing, but shall arise out of the pit, ver. 11. 8. He shall have Kings devoted to him, and to be at his beck, yea, such as were not Kings then, but since have gotten Kingdoms out of the ruins of the old *Roman* Empire, ver. 12, 13. 9. He shall especially make use of them to persecute, ver. 14. 10. When his fall approacheth, some of these shall be his enemies, and God will

make use of them for his ruine, ver. 16. 11. The fountain of that Dominion and seat of that Governour shall be the chief city: that is then ruled over all, to wit, *Rome*, ver. 18, &c. 12. She carrieth all with much state, pompe and profanity, ver. 4, 5.

These are the properties ascribed to Antichrist, whereby he may be discerned, 1. In his nature, he is Ecclesiastick or mixed. 2. In his rise, unwarranted of God. 3. In his welcome, with great respect in the world. 4. In his seat, *Rome*. 5. In his Dominion, Nations, and Kingdoms. 6. His different and twofold consideration of Authority, Civil and Ecclesiastick, whereby he is set out as a twofold head, and by a double type.

These things being clearly properties of Antichrist, and uncontroversably applicable to *Rome*, the question is, whether to *Rome* heathen before *Constantine*, (as *Bellar.* and *Alcasar* say, or, to *Rome* under the Antichrist that is to come, as *Ribera*, *Viugas* and *Cornelius à Lapide* say, or if it be applicable to *Rome* presently, as of a long time it hath been?

For fixing on the time or state, whereto this, that she is antichristian and her Governour Antichrist, may be applied, consider these, 1. This must be true of *Rome* after and immediately after the sixth Government that then was, ceaseth to be a head to *Rome*, and a seventh succeedeth to that which then was. 2. It is when Kings which were not then, shall rise out of the *Roman* Empire, that is, when Provinces shall withdraw their civil dependance from *Rome*, and have Kings of their own. 3. When *Rome* hath turned from a Church to be an whore. 4. It is before its fall, and while the Kings or any of them give him their power, that is, while he is an head. But all these agree well to the Pope and *Rome*, and are fulfilled in them, as they have been now for many years past, and cannot be applied to *Rome* heathen, nor can be expected to be fulfilled afterwards.

The application is made out in the exposition of the words. There are three things I suppose, which especially will stick, 1. That, I say, Antichrist is not properly a civil Prince, but hath other pretences, and upon an Ecclesiastick account or pretext assumeth this greatness; Which is clear, 1. because he headeth the whore, which is not a civil body, but a degenerate Church and whore: and therefore he must be such a head as suiteth that body and carrieth on that defection. 2. He ruleth over Kings, without infringing (as they think) their temporal dominion, which saith, that he must do it on an Ecclesiastick account. 3. From this proceedeth the admiration on the world hath of him. And, 4. this sheweth why in this last consideration, he is looked on as two beasts and two heads, because he is formally Ecclesiastick, but really civil. And in this respect, is not only a distinct head, ver. 1. but a distinct beast, ver. 11. which could not be, if he had not an Ecclesiastick consideration differing from these who went before him.

The second objection, is, that *Rome* is not Antichrist's seat, because, saith *Bellar.* *de pont. lib.* 3. the Kings that are Antichrist's vassals destroy it. *Answer*. 1. Then *Rome* is the whore at that time; for, they destroy her not till she be the whore, and so must it not be *Rome* heathen that is the whore, for, they destroy her not till the beasts ruine be advanced to the fifth vial, as is said, Chap. 16. and in the 17. until she be a whore. But that *Rome* is his seat, appeareth: for, 1. he headeth *Rome*, sitteth on it, and ruleth as the six Heads, or Governments, before him did; but they sat at *Rome*, and had it for their seat, See Chap. 13. 4. he got the Dragons seat, and so it is common with the rest to him to be King of that city. 2. He sitteth so as by him and in him *Rome* keepeth up her former beauty and rule over all the Nations about, during his being Governour: but that cannot be but by his sitting at *Rome*. 3. There is no other reason can be given, why in Antichrist's description

description there should be so much mention made of Rome, and such particular descriptions of the sibness between him and her, except that he is head to her, and supporteth her, and sitteth especially in her and that Rome the prime seat is named for all the Body or Kingdom as Metropolis thereof, as aftergard. 4. That Rome is great during his time, is clear, but no other way but this of his keeping Court there, can be imagined, as that way whereby she ruleth over Nations, and propagateth abominations to them, but that in him, and by him she did it, as by her former Governments in part, who sat there before. Add, 5. that Rome, is some otherways his seat, *vers. 7.* than other Nations are, over which he governeth; and what can that be but this? 6. What other reason is there why Rome is more plagued, as sharing deeper in Antichrist's sin than others (Chap. 18.) but this that it was his seat? And, 7. why would the fall of it be so much lamented, as spoiling all their former Mercat, and scattering their Court, if it had not sitten there? Chap. 18. Beside, *Belharmin's* argument mistaketh; for, it is the Kings, who once were Antichrist's followers that destroy Rome, but not while they are so, do they it, but when Antichrist is discovered, then is his seat hateful to them, whereas his followers lament it, Chap. 18. and therefore have no hand in it.

The third objection hath more shew of difficulty, that these cannot be applied to the Pope, because he arose not from the bottomless pit, *3. e.* unwarrantably, but hath Gods warrant, as they allege by being *Peters* successor, *Ergo*. For answering this objection, we are not to insist in Scriptures, whereby the dominion and office usurped by the Pope is overturned, nor on vindicating of these Scriptures which they make use of in pretending that: (let that be sought from Common places) It shall suffice us to assert, that in Scripture there is no warrant, 1. For the titles or names that he assumeth to himself, there is no such order or officer mentioned by Jesus Christ in His house, as Pope, *Pontifex Maximus*, *Vicar of Christ*, *universal Pastor*, *his holiness*, *Bishop of Bishops*, &c. there is no such shadow in the Word as may warrant these.

[ This word *Papa*, est vox syracusa (say Divines) idem significans quod pater, a *pater* was: It was in old given to all eminent Bishops, as to *Alexander* and *Athanasius*, Bishops of *Alexandria*, apud *Athanasium*; to *Augustine*, by *Jerome* in his Epistles to him; and to *Cyprian*, *Epist. 3.* where *Pamelius* saith, it was a word of honour amongst heathens, as was that of *Pontifex Maximus*: whereof was spoken, *Cap. 13.* See also *Ruffin. Symb.* and *Pamelius* on him.]

2. We may assert, that for the matters wherein they exercise this power, as to dispense with oaths, and obligations of men to others, to dispose of, and transfer Kingdoms, crowns, titles, &c. to dispense with unlawful marriages, constitute new holy days, and change worship, send to Purgatory and bring from it, (as they imagine) to indulge and give pardon even for sins to be committed, to absolve and forgive magisterially sins (without respect to the qualifications laid down in the Word, but) to such as perform such superstitions, and obey such and such orders: to canonize Saints (and thereby, as it were, to create gods to be worshipped.) and many more such things which cannot be reckoned. All these being contrary to the Word of God, and for the most part not committed to any, but reserved to the Lord as His own privilege, we may clearly assert that power in so far to be from the pit, so as if an Angel would profess it, or preach such doctrine, we might account him accursed; yet such is the power pleaded for in the Pope. And in many of these things is acknowledged to be but *ex communi consuetudine*. See *Azor, instit. moral. lib. 6. pag. 561.*

3. If we consider it further in the special properties, wherewith they qualifie the Popes power, as it is essential to his threefold crown, twofold sword, and keys, we will find it of the same nature: as, 1. that it is extensive and universal over

heaven, by opening it, setting up Saints to be worshipped, commanding Angels (as sometimes they have done in their Bulls) over Purgatory and the whole world; over the dead, to torment or relieve them at their pleasure, and over the living in all things, spiritual and temporal; in order to these, over persons Ecclesiastick (as they call them) and Civil, as Kings, Emperours, States, to command them to War or Peace, as they please, and to carry as supreme to them all, ratifying Emperours and elections or not, and disposing of their crowns to others; yea, over consciences they usurp a dominion. 2. That it is absolute, supreme and independent not only of all Kings, but of all Councils and Decrees to which he giveth Authority or not as he pleaseth; and they are of Authority or not, as he confirmeth them; yea, to all traditions, and even to the Scriptures and Word of God, without which the Scriptures would not be by them accounted so, as *Bailius, Catech. part. 1. quest. 12. Aliter non magis fidem adhiberet Mattheo quam Tito Livio*, that is, otherways he would not give more faith to *Matthew* than to *Titus Livius*, and generally all affirm, that being their maxime, that the Church giveth Authority to the Scriptures as to us, and that no decree of the Church hath Authority but from him. Hence, according to this plenipotentiary power, doth he constitute such books to be Scripture or not, and hath added many to the former Canon, which preceeding Councils have not acknowledged, and he doth confirm traditions and fables to be accounted truths as he pleaseth, and yet in all this so sovereignly as none may say to him, What dost thou? *Vid. gloss. in Extravag. Joan. 22. De concessione prebende, &c. tit. 4. cap. 2. Papa gaudet plenitudine potestatis, nec est qui audeat dicere, Domine, Quid ista facis?* But, 3. all this he doth (say they) not only authoritatively, but infallibly as being free from erring: for, his determination is the first rule: and it is so, because he hath determined so, and this determination is not only extended to matters of faith, but of fact, as the canonization of Saints, confirming of traditions, &c. in which (say they) he cannot be mistaken.

Now, all these being pleaded for, as essential to this power, without which they say he could not be Pope; and so essential, that they make them, for the most part, fundamental to Christianity (at least to the members of that Church) and yet they being clearly, not only without Scripture, but against it; yea, to the overturning of Scripture, (for, it were of no great consequence to have Scriptures or not, if all these were true) and it being true that the Lord hath never committed such unlimited power to men (no not to the High Priests under the Old Testament, who were singularly types of Christ) there is strong presumption here, that the power founded on such pillars must not be of God; for, if no such power be committed to any, then there can be no Popes warrantably, because these are essential to him; and indeed except it were received to be so, his power had fallen long since; for, no commission can be shown for many of his practices, but tradition and constant custom of their Popes, as their *Cassius* must confess. Hence it is, that generally in their *School-men* and *Cassius*, the authority by which they determine their Conclusions, is often not Scripture, but such a Decree of such a Pope, and the like.

4. If we consider their outward grandour and pomp, that Emperours and Kings must kiss their foot, hold their stirrup, walk at their foot, give them homage, that they must be so waited on and carried, that they should be covered while others are bareheaded, &c. All which can have no shew in the Word, nor example in Christ nor His Apostles, but being (as *Baronius* granteth in the place cited, *cap. 13.*) derived from the Heathens, and the manner of their *Pontifex Maximus*, it must be looked on as coming from the pit, as its pattern did: which is our fourth assertion.



5. If we will consider that office by which the Pope of Rome pretendeth jurisdiction over all the Church, suppose it but in ecclesiastick lawful things, whereby recourse ultimately is to be had to him, as the only excoꝛder of that power and office; We may assert, that there is no warrant in Scripture; that such power, as an universal jurisdiction over all the Church on earth, should be given or doth belong to the Pope of Rome, I mean even a supream power in lawful things (laying aside their infallibility, and absolute unlimited power in all things; which yet in this case cannot be separated); there is no warrant in Scripture expressly, or that can be drawn from it, to prove that there is such a power of due belonging to the Bishop of Rome, so that whosoever shall come to possess that See, shall be invested with this catholick charge. And if it be not warranted in Scripture, it is not a plant of our heavenly Fathers planting, but must have its rise from the pit, that without his warrant will meddle so liberally with his matters, and in such a manner. Neither can it be thought that the Scriptures, which are full in the enumeration, qualifications, ordinances, callings and directions, &c. of Pastors, yea, of Deacons, in particular charges, should yet be altogether silent in this supream Officer, wherein, as to them, (as Bellarmine saith) the ground of Christian faith is contained, (*Prefat. ad lib. de Pot. de summa rei Christiane agitur*) and there applyeth what is spoken of Christ, as the Corner-stone of the building, *Isa. 28. 16, &c.* to the Pope.

We shall therefore endeavour to make out, that as this power is not warranted by the Scripture under the former four considerations, so neither is it in respect of this, to wit, of the person that assumeth it: and therefore, as to him, must be still from the pit, seeing he hath no warrant for it, even as they would suppose it to be in the Bishop of Constantinople, or any other, if they should assume this power without just title. This we shall hold at, only that the Scripture giveth no power to the Pope of Rome, or warranteth not him to exercise that absolute and universal dominion, Civil or Ecclesiastick, which he pretendeth unto, and this will be sufficient unto our purpose: for, if it fail as to that person, all that pretended power will fall; for, the question is, If the Pope be Antichrist? and therefore we are to enquire particularly, if they for their deep meddling in Christs affairs, as his Vicar, can give any warrant to bear the truth of that conclusion, to wit, that he hath right to it: It is not needful simply to enquire, If there be any such at all? It is enough, if it be not competent to him, Then he usurpeth: And seeing (as Bellarmine asserteth) no other can pretend warrant to that power, Then if it fall in him, it will fall altogether, seeing Christ hath not shown his will to whom it is due: and we are not to account so of any without His warrant, which cannot be produced, &c. and therefore this assertion hath more in it than at first appeareth: for, If it be an office of Christs institution, Then he hath determined, who is to be accounted so, for warranting his peoples obedience; But this He hath not determined. *Ergo, &c.* And on the contrary, if he hath given in the Scripture no denomination of the office, nor qualification of the officer, no limits to the Power, no rules of Election and Ordination, nor grounds whereby the Church may discern who it is to whom such obedience is due in particular, and to none other, Then it cannot be warranted by him, (who hath done it in all other officers fully, and was not inferior to Moses in ordering the affairs of his fathers house) But according to this assertion, the former is truth, the Pope can give no such evidences, either as to the office or the person exercising it. *Ergo.*

In prosecuting this, seeing we have the Negative, the probation is incumbent to them and to make out the affirmative, that not only there is such a power, but that the Pope hath gotten warrant for him to exercise it; and it will not be sufficient to

argue, No other can claim it, Therefore it belongeth to him. We would desire to know from Scripture what more just title he hath to it than others: otherwise any Bishop might so argue, No other can claim it, Therefore its mine. This will serve rather wholly to overturn it, as is said; and if from Scripture they make out their affirmative, the assertion will stand good: yet we shall a little descend to consider their grounds and concessions in this point, and we will find that the weight of their conclusion, that this power doth belong to the Pope, doth rest upon Traditions, Fathers, Councils, and especially the Popes own determination.

That the Scripture giveth such a power to the Pope of Rome, before it can be believed as of divine authority, these three must be made out by it. (See *Greg. de objecto fidei, disp. 1. punct. 7. pars. 37.*) 1. That Peter not only as an Apostle with the rest, but as head and supream over all the Apostles, was furnished with, and established in that Authority by Jesus Christ over them and the Catholick Church, as their head. 2. That Peter sat and had this Authority, and exercised it at Rome, as peculiarly the seat of this Authority, and that this supremacy in Peter was no extraordinary privilege to his person, but to be derived and continued in his successors to the end of the world. 3. That only the Pope of Rome is Peters successor in this supream power, and that by divine Authority it belongeth to that seat, and to him who shall sit there.

To pass the first two (which yet can never be made out by Scripture) the third also must be made out, or it will not bear this conclusion, that it is of faith to believe, that the Pope is invested with this power; but now there is no shadow of this in Scripture; and therefore when Bellarmine cometh to make out this, he foundeth it on these four, to wit, 1. Apostolick tradition. 2. General Councils. 3. Popes Decrees or Statutes. 4. Fathers and antiquity; but none of these are Scripture: and in effect all resolveth on this, the Pope appointeth himself head and successor. *Ergo*, he is head, &c. for it is well known, nothing is received as Apostolick tradition, but what he decreeth to be so. Nor are any general Councils accepted as infallible, but such as are approved by him, and so far as approved, See Bellarmine *De auctoritate Concil. lib. 2. cap. 1.* And *Gregorius de Val.* casteth Traditions and Scripture, but as owned by his Authority, much less then will they admit any Father that differeth from him. Hence sundry Councils and Acts (as that of Chalcedon and Constantinople, in these Acts wherein Constantinople was equalled to Rome) are rejected by them on this ground, because they were not approved by the Pope. So it runneth in this circle, Whence hath the Popes this power; or whence is it clear to us, so as to warrant our faith, that they have that power? They answer, in sum, from themselves, or from such grounds as resolve on themselves, because say they, their power is such, as determineth all these things.

If it be asked further, How getteth these Popes power to determine so; and what warranteth us to rest on their determination? Say they, because they are Peters successors in that universal office. If they be asked again, How is that made out, that they are his Successors? Say they, by such determinations, we know him to be so. In a word, these determinations give him power, and he giveth them power to do so, and so about: yet this is the main thing, to wit, the application of this power to Rome, and particularly to the Bishop thereof, that is here questioned: and though possibly it were not requisite that all the successors should be otherwise known than by history; yet the *ratio Successionis*, as Bellarmine calleth it, to wit, Why the Bishop of Rome hath this peculiar Authority beyond others, that would be known, if it be either of divine or catholick faith, which two are ill distinguished by Bellarmine.

If it be objected to them, These cannot ground a divine warrant to make a thing be believed to be *jure divino*, or of divine authority: Because to make a thing certain to us, *certitudine fidei*, and to be believed as such, there is a twofold certainty required, 1. An objective sureness or certainty in the thing it self, 2. Subjective, in them that believe, that is, such certainty as proceedeth from such grounds as cannot cause a mistake, or fail any; which no humane testimony can bear out: and therefore only Gods testimony can give warrant for this. *Bellarmino* (*De Pontif. lib. 2. cap. 12.*) seeing this, doth go about to distinguish between a divine warrant, or *de jure divino*, and to be of Catholick faith: and saith, though it be not the first, (*fortè*, saith he, as loath to speak it out) Yet it is the second, and to be believed under pain of damnation, upon the grounds foresaid. His words are, *Successio est à Christo, qui uno actu constituit Petrum & successores ejus in Pontificatu ad finem mundi; ratio successionis, i. e. cur Papa succedit, quia est Romanus, non est ex prima institutione Christi (quia alibi potuit Petrus fixisse) sed ex facto Petri;* and calleth it not improbable to be settled at Rome by Christs command. But our question is, How it is evident that this Pope hath ground to claim that succession? or, *Quomodo constet eum Petri successorem esse?* to which this saith nothing: therefore addeth he, that though *fortè Papa Romanus, quia Romanus, non sit jure Divino, tamen si queratur, Si Romanus Pontifex jure Divino sit caput omnium Ecclesiarum? omnino* (saith he) *respondendum est, quia nihil aliud requiritur quam ut ipsa successio sit jure Divino;* yea there is more required before that succession can be believed to be peculiar to that See, seing they go together, and this would be evidenced to be so: for, we ask not now, If there be succession, but why the Pope carrieth himself as successor, and where is his warrant? At last it resolveth in traditions and Councils, which are so, and to be esteemed so, because he decreeth them to be so; and this is the ground of this article of their faith unto them, notwithstanding that the Scripture is silent in it: which yet containeth all things needful to eternal life, *John 5. 39. 20, 21.* And for that instance that *Bellarmino* giveth of a catholick faith, as distinguished from a divine faith, to wit, whether *Paul* left a cloak at *Troas* or not: It is true, this was a truth before *Paul* wrote that Epistle and is yet a truth, not simply necessary to salvation in it self; yet considering it as revealed in the Word, the believing of it now, is of divine authority and hath a divine warrant, which it would not have had if it had not been in the Word, although it had been a truth in it self.

So that when it cometh to this, that the Pope is successor to *Peter*, that is only essayed to be proven by authorities. See *Greg. de Val. disput. 1. De objecto fidei, punct. 7. pag. 35,* and 36. *Cajetan Tom. 1. de primatu Rom. Eccles. all of them abusing Scripture, to prove that Peter was universal Bishop, and that this office is to continue: yet, for the third, that this office belongeth to the Popes of Rome, they can say nothing, but from such grounds as Bellarmine asserteth, or at the most as Gregor. disp. 1. puncto 7. pag. 35, 36, 37. testimoniis omnium laqueatissimis, &c.* for as *Cajetan* observeth, these four things must concur to make out this succession of the Bishop of Rome to *Peter*, 1. That *Peter* himself was at Rome. 2. That he was at it, nor as *Paul* was, in the capacity of an Apostle, but as settled Bishop of that See of Rome peculiarly, and as head of the Church. 3. That *Peter* lived in that seat and died there. 4. That he willed his successors in that particular See and Dioceses of Rome, to be his successors in the headship of the whole Church, & so that by his deed he annexed his catholick power unto that particular See, that whoever should succeed in the one should also be invested with the other, (b. side what is needfull to be cleared concerning every Bishop, that he was lawfully chosen that succeeded in that seat) Now, there is none of

these four that is hinted at in Scripture. Therefore they come to say, as *Cajetan, ibid.* that this is not *ex Evangelica institutione*, but attested unto by *Peters* deed in dying there, and confirmed by an history (or fable) out of *Egiptus*, who saith that *Peter* going out of Rome to eschew martyrdom, did meet *Jesus Christ*, who told *Peter* that he was going again to Rome to suffer, from which *Peter* drew, that *Christ* willed him to return to die at Rome; which he did: and from this riseth the strength of all the arguments of Papists for the Bishop of Romes succession to him, as builded on a ground of faith, because this story holdeth out *Peter* acted by *Christ*: and it is a tradition confirmed by the Pope, as they are alleaged by *Greg. de Val.* From this unclearness it ariseth, that it is hotly disputed, even amongst the learnedest of the Papists, Whether this conclusion, that the Pope of Rome necessarily is *Peters* successor, be *De jure Divino*, or *jure humano ecclesiastico*. And *Dominicus a Soto, in 4. Sent. dist. 24. quest. 2.* (others also are of this mind) by many reasons asserteth the last. And when *Greg. de Val.* condemneth it, he doth it but on these grounds because the Fathers and the Popes have not left that undetermined untill now, and that such an opinion as that of *Soto* doth suppose them to have determined nothing (he saith, *vetus patrum traditio videtur*, and when it is but *videtur* in traditions, what certainty is there? which determination, as is said, resolveth still on the Pope himself: and ye may see more directly this question handled apud *Greg. de Val. punct. 7. pag. 37, 39.* where he doth ride the circle clearly, Saith he, How know we this particular Pope to be *Peters* successor? He answereth, by his determinations in faith and manners. If, secondly, it be asked, how we know his determinations to be right? *Ans.* Because he hath that privilege, who is *Peters* successor; for *Peters* successor hath only that power to determine so. From which it appeareth, that the Authority of this Pope, which is pleaded for as necessary to salvation, not being from the Word, must be from the pit, and yet loose; or, question this succession, and all faileth, it is so essential a ground of Popery, that is thus supported. And though there be uncertainty sufficient from uncleanness in all these four, which *Cajetan* laid down; yet if we add a fifth principle of theirs, to wit, that before we acknowledge the Popes constitutions, or the force of his deeds, we must know that that particular Bishop of Rome hath lawfully succeeded to *Peter*; for as *Gerfon* saith, and *Greg. de Val.* granteth, they supposed this, *talis Papa rite succedit Petro per electionem;* And here the certainty is, as *Greg. de Val.* saith, *certitudine morali, & non fidei, and as Gerfon, ibid. est humana cognitione solum cognitum;* yet if this fail, the obedience cannot be claimed, because if he be an infidel or woman (as once there was) as *Platina* their own writer, *in vit. Joh. 8.* testifieth) such are incapable of orders, or if the election be unlawful, it is null, they have no promise of assistance, in which cases, obedience is not due; or, if there be a schism (as for 70. years there was between two Popes, one at Rome and another at *Avignon*, and neither of which had a successor, but a third was chosen, whiles both these Sees were filled) it will still be uncertain in such a case whom to acknowledge, or how to account of their determinations while this be cleared, so intricate is this great ground of their faith.

If any should say, This succession is but a matter of fact, and needeth no more but humane testimonies or histories? *Ans.* It is not questioned, only about persons or facts, but the ratio why, or fact that maketh Rome have this precedency; and if the conclusion be of faith, the premises that is drawn from it, must be so also; or if the premises be humane, then they can bear no conclusion of Faith: for the conclusion must be suitable to them.

Again, 2. If, such a fact as groundeth our faith, (as to them) and can any humane storie work a divine faith, such as



the History of *Moses* and the *Acts* of the Apostles do? and therefore if the Story of that fact in its matter had been of divine Faith, necessarily to be believed, our Lord would not have neglected it. 3. It is such a fact as the clearing whereof groundeth this supreme Officer to them; and take away that fact and he is away, he dependeth so on it; and so a Deacon, or Pastor shall give more warrant for this place from Scripture, than the supreme Vicar, which is very unsuitable: and yet without supposing it, their Pope is not *Peter's* successor. Such then as is the proof of the fact; such is the ground of this conclusion. 4. There being (as all the forecited Authors say) an identity now between the Bishop of *Rome*, and the head of the Church, that who is the one, he necessarily (and no other) is also the other. Then whatever Authority is given for appropriating that privilege to the Sea of *Rome*, there must be that same Authority for the continued succession of *Peter* (seeing they are one, and the one descendeth by the other;) But that being such, as is before said, necessarily then the succession, which is his only and alienary, & hath never been pleaded for (as they say) by any other, must then be of that same Authority, resting on the same grounds of Councils, Fathers, Popes, Customs, &c. which can never give a divine warrant. And whatever be truth of *Peter's* being and dying at *Rome* (which certainly in a great part was fulfilled before *Luke* wrote the *Acts*) yet is it not for nought that the Lord hath left it unrecorded, that we might thereby know it was not necessary to be believed: and therefore any conclusion which supposeth it to be necessary to be believed, is not necessary, except we rub on the wisdom of God, who recordeth lesser things than this. And therefore a thing may be truth, and yet, not being written, is not necessary to be believed, but with a humane faith, as other histories at the most, whereas no article of faith is thus grounded: because the object of our Faith, or the *ratio* why we believe such a thing, is not simply because such a thing is truth (for, many facts are truth, which we are not obliged to believe) but because God hath revealed such a thing, and testified it to be Truth, Faith resting on that testimony and giving credit to Him that testifieth.

The other Conclusion, to wit, That the Church of *Rome* for these many years past and presently, is the whore intended here, the same argument will make it out. If the *Rome* that is present be the *Rome* unto which all the properties here mentioned do agree, and at this time, Then this *Rome* is that whorish Church; But unto the *Rome* that now is, and hath been this many generations past, agree both the properties and time in which it is to be fulfilled. *Ergo*. The properties given to this whorish Church are four, That she hath her Court at *Rome* and sitteth on the seven hilled City, yet also exercising dominion over many other Nations, *vers.* 15. but differently, so as *Rome* is here peculiar in another manner the fountain and splendour of that Kingdom. 2. That it is *Rome* turned a whore and fallen from the simplicity she had, and to such an apostasie of which *Rome* is the head and chief seat. 3. That it is *Rome* claiming a superiority over all those of her association or apostasie, and deriving her errors to them, and they keeping a dependance on her, she is (and it is when she is) Mother and Metropolis of all, *vers.* 5. 4. It is *Rome* then when the Emperour hath ceased to command it, and another Government or Governour hath succeeded him there. 3. It is when ten Kings are withdrawn from the Empire and have given their subjection to *Rome* on a spiritual account. She that is *Rome* in that case, is the whore: But all these properties agree to *Rome*, not as heathenish but as Popish, and to the Pope as head thereof: And therefore this is neither to be applied to *Rome* heathenish, nor to an Antichrist to come, but to that which is. And it is not unobservable in Gods providence, that considering the special sinnesse, that is holden forth here, both betwixt this City *Rome*, the

Woman, Whore and Beast, that yet the Popish Church should glory in that title of the Roman Church; and many of them dispute that it is impossible to separate their Pope from that very City, or, that elsewhere he might choose to sit and continue Pope; and those who in this grant most, do affirm that he must and would still be Roman Bishop, and that the Church would still be the Church of *Rome*, although that City were possessed by Turks. By this all may the more easily discern, what Church or defection they are, who have such relation to, and dependance on, *Rome* at this time when this prophesie is fulfilled, *ut supra*.

Before we leave this Chapter, it may possibly not be unmeet, that (*coronidis vice*) we consider how the Popish Writers do interpret and apply it, wherein they are wonderfully strained and perplexed. It was their common opinion to understand by this City or Whore, the city or multitude of the wicked generally. This is followed by *Thomas Aquinas*, *Hugo Card.* *Lyranus*, *Haymo*, and many others: but the latter Writers, since Reformation brake forth, have been constrained to cast that opinion, because this City is so particularly circumstantiated, as to point at an individual City (to speak so) and she is contra-distinguished from many Nations and Kings, who yet are certainly a great part of the wicked in the world; and also (*Chap.* 18.) when she is destroyed, there are many wicked, living and lamenting her destruction, and standing at a distance from her.

Upon these and the like grounds, the most learned of them are generally since that time brought to expound it of *Rome*, and (as *Viegas* saith) *impellimur aliam interpretationem excogitare*: and *Ribera* saith, *Interpretes coguntur &c.* *Alcasar in locum* (all whom, with others, we cited before at the beginning of the Chapter) interpreteth it so, and citeth twenty Authors of their most eminent men for it. Also, *Corn. à Lapide*, who addeth many to these cited by *Alcasar*, amongst whom are *Snarez*, in 3. part. tom. 2. *disp.* 5. *Sextus Senensis*, lib. 2. pag. 88. *Peterius*, *Salmeron*, and others. All which take *Babylon* in all this prophesie to hold out *Rome*; and this they and we agree, as to the general.

2. There is again difference amongst themselves how to conceive *Rome* here, so as to save their Pope and the present *Rome* from this application. Hence, some (which is most received) apply it to heathen *Rome*. Others, as *Ribera*, *Blasius*, *Viegas*, and *Corneline à Lapide* apply it to *Rome* under Antichrist, who therefore say, that at or before his coming, *Rome* shall turn heathen, and desert the Pope, and be destroyed by Antichrist, or by the Kings before his coming. Their reasons are, because it looketh to such a state of *Rome*, as then was to be fulfilled in *John's* time; and therefore cannot be understood of heathenish *Rome* but because this opinion supposeth *Rome* to be involved in defection (which cannot stand with her infallibility, and would shake all (seeing some plead so much for *Romes* eternity) and make all suspicious; for, if *Rome* fall then, may it not be fallen already?) Therefore others cast it, (as *Alcasar* and those named by him) applying it to what heathenish *Rome* suffered at or before *Constantines* time, or after by the *Goths*, and *Belisarius* seemeth to favour this, lib. 2. cap. 2. *de Pont. Rom.* Those who take it thus, expound the seven hills literally, but in other things they differ.

1. Some take the beast for the devil; but, others considering that the devil and the beast are differenced, and that this beast is cast into the lake long before the devil, and that the scope is to point out some eminent opposer of the Church for some particular time, therefore they do in general apply it to Antichrist, as also that first beast, *Chap.* 13. (and some make the last a false prophet that maketh way for him) so do they, of that beast, *Chap.* 11. 7. and expressly say, he is one of the seven heads,

here

here mentioned, and also called the eight, because his nature differeth from them, and his hurt to the Church exceedeth them.

2. Concerning the seven heads they differ, some applying it to the seven tyrannous Kingdoms or Empires, *Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, &c.* or, to the seven Ages of the world. Others do cast that, as *Bellar. &c.* and do understand by the seven Kings, all the Emperours indefinitely.

The reasons that do cast the first opinion, are, 1. These Kings here are such as command *Rome*, they being Governours of that City (therefore the seven hills and the seven Kings are set out by one and the same type) and it is brought in as a Character to difference and discern this City mentioned here from others: and the applying of it to the seven Monarchies, agreeth to none of these, nor to the Angel's scope, which is to point out something to come, and to help to discern this City by its heads, when he expoundeth them to be Kings, as well as when he expoundeth them to be Hills, there is but the same scope.

If they say, they are heads of the beast, not of the woman, *Ans.* It is true, but the beast being the Empire that supporteth *Rome*, they must be heads of that Empire; and seeing they are all heads of the same beast, and it being certain that the 6. and 7. are of *Rome*, the rest must be so also. Beside, how can either tyrannous Kingdoms, or such ages of the world be called heads to the beast? If the devil be the beast, he rather headeth them; if Antichrist be the beast, he was not then in being to be headed by them; if the multitude of the wicked be the beast (which yet their former reasons will cast) how will these ages or Kingdoms of the world differ from them? This conceit then is justly casten. Beside, the heathen Emperours being to them the sixth head, and Antichrist to come but three or four years before the end of the world to be the seventh, there would be a too great interval here, and the beast would be without a head so long, which agreeth not, 1. with the scope here, which is to shew the succession of one to another: nor, 2. with the proportion of time that is among the first six heads: nor, 3. with reason, as if the Church were to want oppressors for many hundred years. Beside, this application, being to general, cannot agree with the particularness that is in the rest of the interpretation, especially to the other of the same type, to wit, of seven hills: and there can no reason be given for making the number of the ages of the world or tyrannous Kingdoms, *seven*, more than five, eight, nine, or eleven, &c. except as men shall be pleased to name them: and can such an uncertain rule be the ground of such an application? Therefore they must be Kings that relate to that body; for, it is of that, and not of all the wicked that ever were, that the Angel is speaking.

The other interpretation that thinketh to evite these considerations, by understanding all the *Cæsars* and Emperours of *Rome* indefinitely, or all the persecuting Emperours as *Alcasar* doth, will not be consistent either: for, 1. These Kings are such as five had preceeded, and one was but to come; but that cannot be said of the Emperours either way considered. 2. They are Kings, the first five whereof had fallen, which must be understood not of personal death, but of a politic change of Government. 3. They are such Kings as in that ones time that was to come, *Rome* was to be the whole, and to be otherwise supported, then by that King which then was, or by those that had gone before him; But that cannot be said of heathen Emperours or any of the *Cæsars*, or persecuters: It is therefore some power of greater noblesse to *Rome* after its destruction. And so it must remain, (as we interpreted) that by them are understood diverse changes of Government, whereof the last should be Antichrist, the same with the beast, its considered as he was to come.

And from both these constrained interpretations, we may gather this concession, That Antichrist needeth be no individual person without a succession: for, according to the first, these first six persecuting Kingdoms were not in one person: therefore neither ought the seventh (which they apply to Antichrist) be restricted to one.

If according to the second, by the one head or King that was to come after *John's* time, be understood all the following Emperours, Then by one beast or King, may there not be as well understood a succession of Popes?

Concerning the destruction of *Rome*, they that consider *Rome* here as under Antichrist do agree, 1. That it is yet to come, and that this part of the prophesie is to be fulfilled: *Alcasar* and others, who affirm it to be fulfilled, say otherwayes: but the nature of the destruction and overthrow, threatened to *Rome* here, will not admit of that application. 2. That it shall be a great destruction. But here they differ whether the Pope shall be necessitated to flee from it or not: but the exposition of the sixth vial and of the 19. Chap. will clear us. Beside, when (Chap. 18.) *Rome* after this becometh only a cage for unclean birds, they may consider if they will place him amongst these. That which occasioneth this debate, is, that they think the supremacy so linked to *Rome*, that they cannot be separated but by an immediate warrant from Heaven, and yet Gods People are called to come out of her, Chap. 18. 4. If then the Pope be not capable to give obedience, he is not to be understood among that number. It is true, *Domin. à Soto*, and *Anton. Card. Gaspar Cusani, Vaidensis* and *Alphon. Mendoza* (whom *Cornelius à Lapide* citeth as of one judgment) and any other who hold the supremacy to be due to *Rome*, but *jure humano*, they are not prest with this consequent; yet, the generality of them, who maintain these to be inseparable *jure divino*, or such (as *Corn. à Lap.*) who say, What ever may be disputed *de jure* of the Popes removal, yet they are sure *de facto* it shall never be, these will finde more difficulty in this case.

3. They expound these Kings, to be the Kings that shall be in the world at Antichrist's coming, and that these shall be instrumental in *Rome's* destruction; as also, that this destruction shall be causally procured to *Rome* by the old blood-shed of the former Emperours, which is then to be repayed, with her late guilt of forsaking the Pope.

But in these they differ, 1. that some say, the Kings shall destroy it before Antichrist come, because there are ten Kings at the destruction of it; others say, by Antichrist, after these Kings have submitted to him. The occasion of this difference is the confounding of this Chap. with that of *Dan. 7.* where it is said, that the little horn (applied by them to Antichrist) shall subdue three Kings, and therefore there will be but seven that yeeld to him: but of this, is somewhat said before, that these Prophecies are distinct; and this cleareth it; the Kings here willingly give their power to the beast, and continue to reign with him contemporary: there, the standing and rising of one, supposeth the overthrow of others; We do thus far agree with them, that, 1. *Rome's* destruction, prophesied of here, is to come, 2. that it shall be great, 3. that it shall be by Kings or Governours, such as shall then be in Antichrist's time.

Further, we may observe from these interpretations, 1. What inconsistency there is in them with reason: For, if all they speak of Antichrist were laid down, it would look as if we imputed fables to them. 2. With one another, each differing opinion strongly confuteth another, because none asserteth what is right; and it is the strength of the one opinion, that the opposit is absurd. 3. It is inconsistent with their own way, sometimes they take things exceeding literally in darkest prophecies, (as about the time of Antichrist's continuance) sometimes in the interpretation, which is plainest, they excoigate myste-



rics, as in the exposition of that, the heads are *seven Kings*, i. e. say they, seven ages, and so give a new exposition of that, overturning what the Angel giveth. 4. It is inconsistent with the Fathers: sometimes they stick to them (when they speak of *Rome*, before it become Antichristian) yet their exposition overturneth many assertions of the Fathers on this Chap. All the reason is, because the difficulty is great, to grant that this is *Rome*, and yet that the Pope is not antichrist. And indeed, that being the scope, and intent of this part of the prophesie, it is impossible to wave it, and not to misse the mark. Neither can this confusion and darknesse of theirs be any evidence that this Prophesie is not fulfilled: that is an unsafe ground to argue from, that all Prophecies, however formerly dark, yet do become clear at their fulfilling (which is a main subterfuge of theirs in this case: ) For, 1. do we not see the plainest truths of doctrine dark to these, whom the God of this world hath blinded? 2. Do we not see many Prophecies of *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, &c. which certainly are fulfilled, yet to be obscure to many? And, who will deny, but many Prophecies concerning Christs Death, Birth and sufferings, &c. are clearly fulfilled? yet generally, to the Jews they are as a sealed book, because the vail is not taken off their hearts, although the Word be clear, 2. Cor. 3. Yea, if we look to the strain of this Antichrist all alongst, we will see it is still to many as heresie and blasphemy, to apply it to him: else, would so many worship him, when this Prophesie concerning his coming is fulfilled? and when *Babylon* is destroyed, Chap. 18. yet are there still many that were drunk with its abominations that lament it; and (Chap. 19. many shall side with the beast, even untill the battel of *Armageddon* make an end of him. We ought not therefore to marvel that Antichrists worshippers discern not that the Pope is he, or that *Rome* is his seat. If they so did, then this Prophesie of their admiring of him, adhering to him, and perishing with him, would not have been fulfilled; but, we would rather acknowledge the justice of God in the thing, and observe His truth and omniscience in foretelling it, even as the event is found to be.

Although we have formerly spoken to the many things in the opening of the Chapter; yet, having proposed their opinions, and finding the great weight and stresse to lye in these four, 1. If *Rome's* destruction which is threatened here, be to be executed by Antichrist, or the Kings while they befriend him; or, if by Antichrists enemies, while his kingdom is in destroying?

2. Concerning this defection, for which *Rome* is to be destroyed, if it be the same very defection, whereof Antichrist is the father, (as it were) and here she is to be the mother, *vers. 5.*

3. If that defection, whereof both are guilty, be a falling away from the profession of Christianity to heathenish idolatry, refusing worship to the true God, or Christ, directly and expressly? or, if it be a defection and corruption in Christianity, and such as is consistent with a profession thereof?

4. If all this defection be to be confined within three years and an halfe continuance, which they make the duration of Antichrist, and the expiring thereof in Antichrists ruine shal be but fourty and five dayes before the end of the world and Christs second coming? or, if it shal preceed the end of the world many generations, and so to be in the world already? and consequently, if this *Rome*, as it is to be the whore, and the Pope who is present head thereof, be Antichrist? Seeing therefore much weight lyeth on these, and if one of these pillars be shaken, their doctrine concerning Antichrist will ruine. We, shal therefore shortly propound these assertions or considerations: And, 1. we say, the actors or instruments in this destruction of *Rome*, are not Antichrist or Kings be-

friending his way, neither is this overturning of *Rome* an advantage to his kingdom; but the actors are opposite to Antichrist, though of these who once gave their power to him. And this destruction of *Rome* is a main victory of Christ over the beast: for,

1. *Rome* is the seat of this Antichrist (as upon the fifth vial, Chap. 16. and above in this, and in Chap. 18. is shewed) and this whore, being as it were, the adulteresse, and Antichrist the adulterer, he must certainly have his residence where she dwelleth, seeing he supporteth this city by dwelling in it, even as its greatnesse was supported by the former heads, by their dwelling there: its overthrow therefore must be near to him. Its, 2. while these Kings give their power to Antichrist, then *Rome* is in pomp, and is supported by him; for, while he is great, she is so too; and he is great so long as the Kings give him power, Therefore it is not while they continue friends to the beast, but when they become enemies. 3. This destruction is the prosecution of one of the vials (we say, the fifth) all which pursue the beasts kingdom to destroy it. 4. This is marked as a main victory of the Lamb over Antichrist, who for a long time had made use of these Kings against him: it can be therefore no victory to Antichrist for which the Saints thus rejoyce, Chap. 18. 5. Add, that (Chapter following) all Antichrists followers are lamenting: and would they lament the destruction of *Rome*, if it were procured by themselves? and yet supposing (as they do) that then Antichrist commandeth all, can there be so many Kings and great men, &c. elsewhere to lament that ruine? 6. Could *Rome* be charged, as mother of harlots in the earth and yet to have no share in Antichrists defection? yea, it is a fountain of it, and therefore its ruine must have influence on the weakning of his kingdom.

2. We say, that the defection whereof *Rome* is found guilty, and wherefore she is thus plagued, is the very same with antichrists: which thus appeareth, 1. *Rome's* defection is some singular defection very general and extensive, and is every where propagated to others, Chap. 17. 5, 6. and 18. 9. But there is no other such apostasie that is universal, spoken of in Scripture, but Antichrists, which singularly is the *falling away*. 2. All the characters of Antichrists defection agree to this *Rome*, 1. She commandeth over Nations, so doth he. 2. Both spread far and wide. 3. Both are guilty of the blood of Saints and great persecution. 4. These who give their power to him, commit fornication with her. 5. They belong to one time, and the beast Antichrist supporteth this city while it is a whore, and therefore he must be thought to strengthen her in her whoredoms. Beside what was said, that *Rome* is Antichrists seat, doth clear this also: And wherefore should *Rome* perish in Antichrists ruine (which is carried on principally by the vials, Chap 17.) or be lamented by his friends, Chap. 18. if she did not partake deeply of his sin? neither could she be called *the mother of abominations in the earth*, if yet she should have no hand in Antichrists abominations whereof the world will be guilty at the time of her ruine, as the most learned of themselves grant. And, to what end should there be still such connexion betwixt *Rome* and Antichrist all alongst, if a special relation between *Rome* and that defection were not demonstrated by it.

3. We say, that this defection, whereof Antichrist and *Rome* are found guilty, is not a total falling from Christianity in the profession of it, but such, as, falling in the matter & corrupting the principal Truths of Christianity, shal yet stick boldly to a proud profession of Christianity, as claiming a special relation to Christ above others: for, 1. Antichrists defection is such, (as we shew, Chap. 13.) and they are one. 2. This great Antichrist is some way proportionable to the petty Antichrists that were in *Jobn's* time, and were his fore-runners; but

but these were not simply Heathens, but such as under the name of Christianity, and pretending to be eminently for it, (so as to cry down true Apostles) did wrong Christ. 3. It is that defection spoken of, 2 *Thes.* 2. which is a giving up to believe lies, even while he sitteth in the Temple of God, and boasteth of being a prime instrument in the Church. 4. His defection is such as was letted by the standing of the heathen Emperours, whereas if heathenish Idolatry were his sin, Antichrists design had not then been working under ground, but had been palpable in them. 4. It is observable, that when-ever the Scripture speaketh of Antichrists defection, it distinguisheth it away from heathenish idolatry, and speaketh of it as of another thing; so, 2 *Thes.* 2. Antichrists mystérie of iniquity is opposed to that that was then among Heathens for the time: and by comparing the last part of *Chap.* 12. of this Book, with *Chap.* 13. it will appear, that Antichristianity succeedeth to Paganism, as a new design of the devils, to recover what he lost by the fall of the former. Add, that here it is called *whoredom*, which supponeth it to be against a marriage-tye, *Ezek.* 16. 36, 38. which could not otherwise be. Again, If Antichrists, or *Romes* defection, were thus gross, why should it be called a mystérie, 2 *Thes.* 2. and here, *ver.* 5? and what need were there of so many marks to discover *Rome* under that state, what *deceivableness* would there be there? The Scriptures insisting so much in this, is certainly to make Believers warie, and to shew there will be need of spiritual wisdom to discern her, or him. Lastly, It is said, that *all the world* (except the Elect) *wondered after this beast*: and can it be thought that all Christians shall turn Pagans except the Elect, and that there shall be no hypocrites in the Church? yet this contradistinguishing of Antichrists followers (not from the Church visible, but from the Elect, who invisibly are so) saith, that this defection will make a narrower search in the Church than Paganism can do.

We do therefore take this assertion for truth, that *Romes* defection under Antichrist is a spreading of lies under the pretext of Christianity, not simply striking against God, but against Christ in his Offices, as Mediator, and the end of them, and derogating from them; in the spreading of which, the city of *Rome*, as a mother, hath a special influence and claim.

4. We would say concerning the continuing of Antichrist, or this defection and the time of its close, that it is not to be confined to one person (and that within three years and an half) and to finish but forty five dayes before the end of the world; but is to take up a longer time. Of this we spoke somewhat, *Chap.* 11. and *Chap.* 13. and also before on this. And now we further add, that Antichrist hath a proportionableness in his continuance to the great effects which his dominion hath on the world; But that cannot be within three years and an half. 2. Antichrist is one, as the series of the heathen Emperours was one; for he is the head next succeeding, and he is opposed to him, 2 *Thes.* 2. *He that letteth must be removed before he* (that is, Antichrist) *should come*. Now, seeing he that letteth was not an Emperour personally, but the series and time of them in their continuance, Therefore Antichrist who succeedeth as the other was removed, is not one person, but a succession: and would the Scripture so frequently and pressingly speak of Antichrists kingdom and that defection, if it belonged only to the case of the Church for three years and an half immediately before the end of the world? certainly many other trials of the Church had been of greater concernment: beside, Antichrists hurt being principally to souls, it cannot be effectuated so in such a time, which can have influence, at most, but upon some of one generation.

For that part of their opinion, that saith that Antichrists coming is but to preceed the end of the world three years and seven or eight moneths, and *Romes* destruction to be within that time of his reign, there is for this no probable shew: for,

1. Are there not many that lament *Babylons* ruine and rejoyce over her? and will that be but for a year or such a time? 2. Is not the battel of *Armageddon*, *Chap.* 19. posterior to this, where the beast is taken? Again, Is not that overthrow of *Gog* and *Magog* posterior to that, *Chap.* 20. when they are cast in the lake, where the beast is, before they come there? Beside, Is it probable that in the end of the world, when all, especially the Jews, shall give themselves to Christ, that universally they shall again make defection? And doth it not appear, that a glorious Church shall be on the earth after Antichrists height? I desire it may be considered, that the Jews are, in the body of that Nation generally to be converted after their blinded estate; which is yet to be fulfilled. Now, when shall that conversion be? It must either be before this Antichrist, or after his destruction; But neither can be said: It cannot be before his destruction; for, 1. then they would not be so ready to receive Antichrist and follow him (which yet they pretend) to *Jerusalem*. 2. Where is there a falling away of the Jews for the second time spoken of? But on the contrary, the Lords promise looketh otherwise, *Rom.* 11. which importeth such a re-ingrafting as not to be broken off again: and considering the tenderness that the Jews shall have after their re-ingrafting, *Zech.* 12. 10. for so much wrong done to Christ formerly, can it be thought that they shall be the prime instruments of promoting Antichrist again, even after so much mercy is shown unto them, and that so suddenly? Neither can any say that the Jews conversion is to be suspended till Antichrists ruine, upon their principles, because, say they, there are but forty five dayes to the end of the world: either therefore Antichrist must preceed that time allowed him by them, or the prophesie concerning the Jews conversion must be shaken.

From this it will necessarily follow, that the coming and revealing of Antichrist in the world, must necessarily preceed that time; if his ruine be sooner and his continuance longer, his rise must be proportionable: and considering that the Apostle speaketh of the working of that mystérie in his time, it must either be said, that it hath left off working (which agreeth not to his scope) or that it hath continued working for many hundreds of years, and hath made no progress (which were absurd to say) or, we must say, it hath already come to an height, and we are to look for it in the generations preceeding the end of the world. 3. To what end were the many exhortations to watchfulness that are propounded even to the Christians that lived in the first ages after the Apostles dayes, if they belonged only to the Christians in the last four years? Yea, 4. seeing from *Chap.* 12. ult. and *Chap.* 13. 1. it is clear, that Antichrists rise is the second great design which Satan driveth to overthrow the Church after the overturn of heathen Emperours, or paganism, Shall it be thought, that for ten or twelve hundred years he hath had no successe in it? or, that the Church hath been so long free from a publick oppressor? Add, that he being at a height, before the first vial which beginneth his ruine, & there being a long time to the pouring out of all, before the end, it must be thought that his rise and growth to his height, was proportionable in length of time: and therefore must preceed for many generations. Again, the world that is overturned by the vials (being the world of the beast, is that same world, which encreased under the trumpets, the encrease of it is under the one, and the ruine of it under the other; and seeing the trumpets will rise that high as to succeed the seals, which contained the first period of heathenish persecution, It will follow therefore not only, that this defection will and must be long before the end, but also that it is already come into the world.

If we can then make out this, that this defection hath already seized on *Rome*, and that she must before this time be infected with it, there will be a short way to  
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loose all the former questions: which may thus clearly be made out,

We have four characters to evince it, in this Chapter. 1. If the sixth Government over *Rome*, which was in *John's* time be now ceased from ruling that city, Then this defection must be come; for so the Angel fixeth that time, and, 2 *Thes.* 2. the Apostle timeth Antichrists revealing, and the coming of that falling away, spoken of there, at *his* removing (to wit, the heathen Emperours) who then did let.

2. If the seventh Head or Government over *Rome* be come, which then was to come, and be acknowledged as is spoken of in this Chapter, Then the apostasie contemporary with it, is come also.

3. If there be ten Kings arisen, to be supream independent Governours over Provinces of that Empire, which in *John's* time had not power in themselves, but were dependent on the Empire as parts of it, and have given their power to a new head upon an new account, Then this is fulfilled; But all these three, in the former exposition, are made out: Therefore this defection, which is supposed in all these changes, must have its beginning also.

4. If some of these Kings that once acknowledged this seventh head, be withdrawn from it, Then the defection must have been at its height; for, their withdrawing supposeth them once to have been involved in it, as the context cleareth. But in experience it is evident that some of these Kings have withdrawn, and so in part this event prophesied of is fulfilled: Therefore what it presupposeth, must be fulfilled also: for, this their withdrawing must either be that prophesied of here, or some other thing; But it can be no other event: because, 1. the Kings that rise, are the first that shall rise so qualified as are here: and so, 2. the withdrawing of these Kings that withdraw, is the first withdrawing of these Kings upon this account of hating *Rome* as the whore. For the context and series will clear this, the scope being to deduce *Romes* future remarkable changes without intermission; as, 1. Then heathen *Cæsars* did govern all. 2. He shall be removed, and that Empire shall be weakened and not have the dominion that it had in the world. 3. Out of it shall arise so many Kingdoms, which shall be independent as to it. 4. There shall step up a Government from the bottomless pit of another nature than the former, that shall govern *Rome*. 5. These Kings that withdraw from the former head, shall willingly give their power and homage unto this Government upon another account. 6. These Kings (or some of them) again, out of hatred to *Rome* and that Governour, shall withdraw from it and hate her and diminish her greatness. These steps go in a series succeeding to one another immediately, and cannot be interrupted by the rising of any other Kings, or their withdrawing after it, without confounding this prophesie and darkening the Angels interpretation and quite overturning of the scope, no more than we can say there may be other cities with seven hills, &c. to which what is said of this can agree, seeing he pointeth in this interpretation at as particular and singular events in respect of what was to come, as in respect of what then was present.

5. We may argue from *Chap.* 7. 1. thus, That defection, mentioned *Chap.* 7. of the winds which then were to blow, is this apostasie of Antichrist; But that defection is already, come. *Ergo*, &c. That its Antichrists defection, appeareth, 1. from the singular hurt of it; it is the great defection that the Church was to be troubled with after heathenish persecution. 2. It is the defection of the fifth trumpet, and the same that is mentioned *Chap.* 12. as was said on the place; But that that must be come, this will clear it, that it immediately succeeded to the seals, and was immediately to follow upon them, and the Angels hast to seal the Elect evidenceth it, which is more fully opened there. Now, the seals having their close at the

overturning of the heathenish Empire, This then which immediately succeeded, must long since be in being.

6. We may gather it, thus, This defection is contemporary with the Prophets prophesying in sackcloth, the womans fleeing to the wilderness, *Chap.* 12. and is the same with the Gentiles treading the utter court. *Chap.* 11. But both these are begun, even at the child's taking up to heaven, which is the close of heathen persecution (yea, and is closed as to the dayes set there) Therefore this must be of a long time since in the world also: both these propositions we cleared on *Chap.* 11. And all these arguments that prove the contemporariness of the beast and Babylon with the trumpets, and the succession of both to the heathenish persecution, and that immediately, as on *Chap.* 6. *Left.* 1. and 8. *Chap.* 7. *Left.* 1. *Chap.* 9. *Left.* 1. *Chap.* 11. *Left.* 4. *Chap.* 12. *Left.* 1, and 3, &c.

7. This defection is the same with Antichrists, as is said: Now, his defection is long since begun, and hath its rise from the healing of the head, which was wounded, *Chap.* 13. as there was made out, Therefore this is not to come.

8. We may have some light from *Chap.* 20. where this will be clear, that Antichrists defection must go before the thousand years there mentioned, because it supposeth saints to have been killed by the beast, who are there brought to reign; But we cannot look that these thousand years are wholly to come, and his persecution to go yet before it also, (that would take longer time to the fulfilling of all events, than in reason any will allow, yet to be running to the end of the world) This concludeth the more strongly, because generally not only our writers, but even the Popish themselves grant this, that it is not to come, but that they are begun, if they be not finished, so do *Corn. d lap. Viagas, Alcasar*, the *Rhemists* and others, who though they senselessly apply it, and with contradiction, as their manner is; yet agree in this, that long since they are begun. And although there should be difficulty to show when this defection began and how, (because much of that riseth from humane storie) yet these characters prove it must be in being and before this time begun; and that is sufficient to us. All these arguments begin it (almost) after the close of the heathenish persecution, whereof we spoke more on *Chap.* 11.

We may add an argument or two further, thus, If every condition of the visible Church be either contemporary with the seals, that is, the heathenish world, or with the antichristian world under the trumpets wherein Antichrist cometh to an height, or with the vials wherein is his declining, Then this apostasie must be come, because we are not now under the seals; that period is past: we must therefore be under one of the following two, seeing these three prophesies carrie on the series to the end; But if we be under the vials, then Antichrist is not only come, but is already at his height: and it is not like that there being so many hundred years since the seals ended and the trumpets began, that still they be running, at least, in the first six; for, the seventh comprehendeth the vials.

Again, if the properties, concomitants and characters and events given to discern this defection be fulfilled, Then this defection of Antichrist must be come, seeing these characters can agree to no other; But we will find the first true, as the former exposition of *Chap.* 9, 11, 13, and 17. will clear. *Ergo*. Taking this for granted then, that the antichristian defection is of a long time since come, and this also, that when it cometh, it continueth until *Romes* defection, which yet is not fulfilled: It must therefore follow, that it is in being for the present in the world, and hath been so for a long time; and that therefore we ought to look where it is for the present.

This is certain, that it is not to be sought amongst *Pagans* or *Turks*, but amongst professed Christians. 2. Not among ancient Hereticks that now are not in being, or such as have no pompe or splendor in the world: this being so eminent a Kingdom, cannot

cannot be applied to them. It must therefore be either in the Roman Church or amongst us who are called Protestants; it can be attributed to no third now in being: But for us, they themselves will absolve us; for, we have neither the feat of this defection, nor a Head or Monarch, as is over this kingdom, &c. This cursed privilege therefore belongeth to them who have both, and glory in them.

2. Again, if these be truth, that *Rome* is infected with Antichrists defection while it is in the world, and is the whore spoken of after its appearing till she be destroyed, Then it will follow (laying aside other arguments from other circumstances) that *Rome*, as it is and hath been for many years, is the whore here spoken of, which is guilty of the Antichristian defection; (and this consequence will stand good till the antecedent be overturned) But the former is truth, from the former arguments, and from their concessions that grant that this destruction is not yet come. *Ergo*.

3. We may therefore resume our argument confidently. If all the characters applied to this whore be verified in *Rome* now present, and as it hath been for many years, and in its Governour the Pope, Then is this *Rome* the whore, which is to be destroyed, and the Pope Antichrist, and no other is to be looked for; But the former is truth, they are fulfilled, and in them. *Ergo*, We may warrantably conclude that she is the whore, and he the Antichrist.

It is a wonder to consider how little the most learned adversaries have to say to this, except what evidenceth the force of the wine of her fornications on them: for, if Antichrist be come, there is no way to vindicate *Rome* and their Pope from this charge, it so natively followeth. Again, there is no way to evite this, that he is already come, but by pointing-out such another imaginary Antichrist as shall never come, and thus to bound him up to the three or four last years of the world, contrary to the whole strain of this Prophecy, in some part following the way of the Jews, who, to evite the fulfilling of the Prophecies concerning the true Messiah, do fabulously inquire for a Messiah contrary to the Scriptures, with such wars and effects of his reign: which, because they are not fulfilled, therefore consciously they adhere to this, that the true Messiah is not yet come, which way, as it is just with God in both, thus to plague their rejecting of clear light, so ought it to work humility and commiseration in us, considering how unreasonable the wisdom of man is in the things of God. They say, 1. It cannot be the Church of *Rome*, but the City. *Ans.* But we have shown it is not the City simply (for, then it had been a whore long before *John* wrote; for there was a City) but it is that City once a Church and afterward degenerating. Then (say they) *Peter*, and the Martyrs under the Heathens, are to be reckoned of this defection, for they lived there. *Ans.* No; for then that City was not become an harlot, neither is it simply *Rome* that is the whore, but *Rome* degenerated, such as she was foreseen to be after the heathen Emperours removal out of the way, which was not then fulfilled. Nor is it simply living there, but as a member of her that maketh one guilty, except it be made sinfull by other circumstances. Lastly, they say, *Rome* cannot be the whore, because (forsooth) of her holiness, And what is that? There are so many Abbacies, Mortifications, holy Church-men, Relicks and Temples of Saints, many Masses and such like there, &c. All which serve not to prove this conclusion, that she is so. And it is not unobservable, that immediately after this answer, *Corn. à Lap.* professor at *Rome*, doth justifie the toleration of Stews and Brothel-houses in it, as a thing tending to prevent much sin, and becoming a well ordered Commonwealth; And when this is mentioned by them as a piece of *Romes* holiness, we may the more easily judge of the rest.

We may add yet one argument more for confirming of our

application, which especially is binding, from their own principles. The *Rome* that is described here to be the whore, and as such to be destroyed, is either *Rome* heathen, which is past, or under Antichrist, which is to come, or popish under the Pope, which is present: for, (as *Alcasar*, *Disp.* 1. in hoc caput. asserteth) there is no other *Rome*, which it can be applied unto; But neither of the first two can be said: Therefore it must be the *Rome* that is present. It cannot be *Rome* heathen which is past; for so the arguments urged by *Viegas*, *Ribera*, and *Cornelius à Lap.* against it, are unanswerable: some whereof are formerly touched in general.

*Arg.* 2. If it be the destruction of *Rome* heathen, Then it must either be (as *Bellar.* and some others make it) the destruction which *Rome* suffered by the *Goths*, *Vandals*, &c. and the rest of the barbarous Nations; But that cannot be: for, 1. that is not done by Antichrist, the Beast, or Kings, befriending him (as they say) nor for that guiltiness, as we and the text say. 2. *Rome* was not then the whore, neither upon that account did these pursue it. 3. That destruction was not unrecoverable, as is here prophesied of. And, 4. (as *Alcasar* urgeth) it is not suitable to punish *Rome* heathen by the overturning of *Rome* christian, and now become so holy: it cannot be this then. Or, 2. It must be the overthrow which *Constantine* gave to the heathen Emperours (as *Alcasar* asserteth it) But that cannot be, 1. That was not of *Rome* the whore, which had once made defection. 2. That was not a destruction of *Rome*, (much less a total overthrow, as is implied in *Chap.* 18.) but was rather a liberation of *Rome*; for even *Rome* the City had much freedom and glory by this, which is contrary to the scope of this Chapter and the Chapter following: therefore this opinion is not only called (*singularis*) a singular opinion, by *Cornelius à Lap.* but by *Alcasar* himself, (*Not. 11. proemiali*) is suspected to be accounted a paradox: It is true, that was indeed the wounding of one of the heads, mentioned *Chap.* 13. But it is one thing to wound the head, another thing to destroy the City itself, the Government had been often changed before, yet the City stood. Now, this destruction is not any such, which was to come on its Governours only, but on the City itself; and that a total stroke: Therefore this cannot be intended here, but is justly casten, and that unanswerably by the Authors foresaid, especially the last. This then cannot be understood of heathen *Rome* in any sense. Nor, 2. can it be understood of *Rome*, as under a defection yet to come so immediately before the end of the world: for, 1. It is not agreed amongst themselves if it be possible that *Rome* can fall into such defection; yea, others, as *Alcasar* (*Disp.* 1. in cap. 17. and *Notat.* 11, and 13. in *proemiali*.) doth by many reasons oppose this, and with many Authorities and Prophecies, as one of *St. Benedikt.* cited out of *Gregorius*, whereby it was still taken for truth, that *Rome* should never again be heathen. And, he saith, this opinion is (*nova, & que ansam hereticis prebet & omnino improbabilis, &c.*) new, improbable and favourable to hereticks, giving them ground to alleage, that since *Rome* hath now so many images, &c. that it hath already fallen to that defection. And although his Authorities be not much, yet the argument that he draweth from the series of the prophesie against it, whereby he sheweth that this prophesie relateth to events long before the end of the world, and the other events, as that of *Gog* and *Magog*, and others, must follow it, are convincing and unanswerable. For confirming whereof, we add these considerations further, 1. That by this prophesie the state of the true Church is holden forth to be most glorious immediately before the end: Therefore it cannot consist with such an universal defection as this. This will blind the more, if we take in the consideration concerning the Jews conversion formerly mentioned, which hath with it the fulness of the Gentiles, as its completion.



2. It is certain that the seven vials have the last plagues, Chap. 15. and also that these seven Vials bring judgement on the Beast or Antichrist (who is singularly the beast, and the object of the judgement of the first Vial, Chap. 16. 1, 2. and supposeth this defection to preceed) Now, it cannot be supposed that all these Vials are to be bounded within so short time to the end of the world, especially considering the enlargement of the Church, which, by these contemporary prophecies is clearly intimated to fall under them. Therefore that application unto any future state of Rome, cannot stand: and being by themselves neither of these can stand, it must necessarily follow, that the third is a truth, and that Rome, as here considered, is the Rome now in being. And if any should say, that *Theologia symbolica* is not *argumentativa*, and therefore no solid argument can be drawn from this Prophecy: *Alcasar* answereth, (*ubi supra*) that though this or that particular expression will not bear an argument in such Scriptures; yet,

saith he (and that truly) where the scope and series agree joyntly in a conclusion, it must be of force, seeing it is Scripture, otherwise no safe interpretation might be drawn from any prophetic or enigmatical Scripture. And therefore, before the adversaries can exempt Rome present, or the Pope from this charge, they must not only answer what we say, but must more satisfyingly answer what one of them opposeth to another, which can never be done untill they agree with us in the conclusion.

We have been the longer in this, because it is indeed the great scope of this Prophecy, to make this whore discernable, and it is their great work to disguise her so, that she be not discerned. And this Chapter is acknowledged by all to be the main seat of this Controversie, and the chief key, yea as some call it, the Castle of this prophecy (*Arx Apocalypseos*), the opening and taking-in whereof, doth both confirm what is past, and make way for what is coming.

## LECTURE I.

### CHAP. XVIII.

Verf. 1. **A**Nd after these things I saw another Angel come down from heaven, having great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory.

2. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

3. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

4. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues:

5. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembred her iniquities.

6. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double, according unto her works; in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double.

7. How much she hath glorified her self, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she hath said in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

8. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine: and she shall be utterly burnt with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.



**B**Y the vials (Chap. 16.) a general view was given of the destruction of Antichrists kindgom, especially by the last three. Chap. 17. verf. 1. the Angel proposeth a more particular exposition of that judgement in an explicatory vision: and for the greater clearness, he, 1. describeth that kindgom, which is the object of these plagues, under the title of a Whore and Babylon, pointing her so out, as it is evident to be Rome in the latter times. 2. He describeth Antichrist the head, under the appearance of a beast, which supporteth that whore. 3. He doth thereafter point out the principal seat of that dominion. 4. He giveth a little general hint at her destruction: all these were Chap. 17. He proceedeth now to explain more fully that destruction, 1. of the whore Babylon, or Rome, in this 18. Chap. 2. of the

beast or head, Chap. 19.

This Chapter belongeth to the explicating of the fifth vial, as appeareth, 1. That vial is on the seat or throne of the beast, this describeth Babels destruction, which in Chap. 17. we heard to be the beasts seat and throne. They therefore describe the judgement of the same thing, to wit, Rome, and if Rome were not Antichrists seat, but to be destroyed by him, Why then would Antichrist and his followers so lament and regrave her ruine?

2. The destruction here described of Rome or Antichrists kindgom, is not that of the last vial, for that hath nothing here in time behind it, and cometh after the battel of Armageddon, where the beast that surviveth the destruction of his seat, is taken as is clear, vial 6. But this destruction is such, as after it, both many of Romes friends (especially Kings, who under the sixth vial will adhere to the beast) lament that destruction

destruction, and many of the Saints do rejoyce over it, and its irrecoverable ruine; yea, such a destruction, as preceedeth the Jews calling, and the battel of *Armageddon*, which is in the sixth vial, as is clear from *Chap. 19.* which followeth. Therefore the great destruction of *Rome* here insisted on, must be the very same (*Chap. 16.*) under the fifth vial, which being the most remarkable step of the overthrow of that kingdom (which the other two vials do perfect thereafter) is the more largely insisted on.

This destruction of *Rome* (being stiled *Babylon*) is set out in expressions borrowed from the Prophets concerning the destruction of old *Babylon*, whereby its ruine is set down in the certainty, greatness, terribleness, justice and irrecoverableness thereof. And that by the voices of three several Angels (if the second be an Angel) one after another. The first speaketh unto *v. 4.* the second from *ver. 4. to ver. 21.* the third unto the end, and for confirmation, addeth a sign.

In the first, the denouncer is described, *vers. 1.* 2. His manner of denouncing, *vers. 2.* 3. The denunciation is set down. The denouncer is another Angel than spoke to *John, Chap. 17.* God hath many waiting on Him, and maketh use of them at his pleasure. 2. He is a mighty Angel: all angels are mighty, yet there are degrees, some more excelling in strength than others: there are Angels and Archangels, but of how many orders we will not determine. The Schoolmen in this (as in all other unrevealed mysteries) do confidently define, that there are three hierarchies and nine orders, every hierarchy comprehending three orders. The first hath Seraphims, Cherubims, Thrones; the second, Dominations, Might, or *Virtues*, Powers; in the third they place Principalities, Archangels, Angels: this they presume to have from *Dionysius (Pseud-areopagita)* who saith, *de Eccl. Hierar. lib. 7. cap. 7.* that he had this by tradition from his master *Hierothens.*

3. As He is great in power, so He excelleth in glory, *the earth was lightened, &c.* (as all these ministring spirits do) and, it is like, had some visible manifesting of His glory in this work. The making use of such instruments, sheweth, 1. that God thinketh it a great work; for, mighty Angels are employed in such, as the Archangel in raising the dead. 2. That it will effectually be done, that instrument will effect it. 3. That it is Gods work and not mens to perfect this judgment; therefore ought He to be trusted with it, and depended on in it. 4. It is said of the Angel, *he came down from heaven*; it telleth heaven is the mansion of these glorious Spirits, *Zech. 3. 5, 7.* they stand by as attendants, and it is a privilege to be admitted amongst them: though their motion be swift, yet do they at Gods order go from one end of the earth to another, changing their place, yet keeping their glory, and counting it no loss to do their Master service. The coming down sheweth not only a readiness in the Angel to do what is committed to him, but the approaching of the ruine he denounceth, and a greater clearness in the thing denounced, when he cometh near to do it.

*Verf. 2.* It is said, he *cried with a mighty voice*: which sheweth both the thing to be certain and remarkable, and him to be serious in going about it.

The denunciation containeth these three parts of *Romes* destruction, borrowed from the Prophets. The 1. is *Isa. 21. 9.* *Jer. 51. 8.* the first denouncing *Babylons* ruine more at a distance long before it come; the second more nearly foretelling it: We had these same words, *Chap. 14. 8.* of an Angel; but this differeth, in that he is called a *mighty Angel*, and that *he cometh down and cryeth mightily*, neither of which are in the former. The reason is, because that Angel (*Chap. 14.*) denounced the fall of that Kingdom, first, when the light of the Gospel began to break out; this setteth it out nearer her end, and so speaketh it more clearly and powerfully,

to shew it is now by the fifth vial fulfilled, or certainly to be closed.

If it be asked here, how Angels speak, who have no organs as we have? *Ans.* There are three ways of speaking attributed to Angels, and mentioned in this Book. 1. When Angels speak to men audibly, as to *John, Chap. 1. 9.* 2. When they speak in visions, as to *John* in the Spirit, or to *Joseph* in a dream; even as things are represented to the sight in vision, so may they be to the hearing. 3. When they speak one to another, as *Chap. 14.* The first way, Angels speak audibly to men, by forming an audible voice in the air, as they appear to sight by assuming a visible body. The second way they speak in visions, is by putting in, or working impressions of these things on the spirits of men. To the third, they speak one to another, by ordinating by their wills such conceptions towards such an Angel, one or more to be understood by them; This is most rested on by the School-men, and thus they say, 1. An Angel speaketh to one or more at once, as he ordinares his conception towards them. 2. That thus they speak with a like ease and facility at a distance, as when they are near other. 3. That thus they signify their conceptions to God. And, 4. thus they say, will the just men made perfect (at least in their souls) have communications one with another, or with Angels in glory. This (they say) is not *conceptum imprimendo* (which was *Scotus* opinion) but *ordinando*, and so then that *locutio*, or speaking, is not *actus ordinans conceptum*, but *conceptus ordinatus a voluntate, ut alter intelligat.* Our Divines do also assent most to this. But this we insist not on, neither will we pass any determination. In a word, *Babylon*, that is, *Rome*, her certain and approaching ruine is set down.

The second part of the denunciation setteth out this ruine in its greatness, as dreadful and irrecoverable, borrowed from *Isa. 13. 14.* and *34. 13, 14, 15.* *Jer. 51. 37.* where old *Babylons* ruine is spoken of, she shall be so far destroyed (for, it is so certain that it is supposed and set down as come already) that in stead of unclean men and great pomp of great men in her before, now she shall be utterly desolate, haunted and inhabited by none, but ghosts or ill spirits, and furies, and foul and unclean creatures; such as Owls, Wildcats, &c. as ye see old Abbacies or Monasteries, or Castles when walls stand and none dwelleth in them, they are direful-like to men, so shall *Rome* be, saith this Angel: which importeth a great desolation, and it is used for that end in the Scriptures cited.

If it be asked, If there be such a thing, as the haunting of evil spirits in these desolate places? We answer, 1. That there are evil spirits ranging up and down through the earth is certain, even though hell be their prison properly, yet have they a sort of dominion and abode both in the earth and air; partly, as a piece of their curse, this is laid on them to wander; partly, as their exercise to tempt men, or bring spiritual or temporal hurt to them, this is clear, *Job 1.* 2. That they haunt such desolate places of the earth most, may be also clear. Hence *Matth. 12.* he is said to walk through waste and dry places, and he used to drive these that were possessed to the tombs: This is, and may be partly a part of their curse, to be restricted there (except as they get liberty to go abroad, as these got to enter the swine, and not to be cast to hell) therefore is it here *φυλακὴν* in the original, which signifieth a prison; partly, to shew the accursedness of the place to be thus inhabited, as *Saul* was when an evil spirit possessed him after his rejection: partly, they delight in these places, as fitted to make them the more terrible from them, and as triumphing in the desolation they have brought on men, these judgements being the effects of sin brought on by them. Some think they glory in these desolations and graves, as evidences of their victory over men, which yet tendeth to their greater condemnation. 3. What ever be of the



the former, this is sure, that such places desolate, and uninhabited, use to work generally a horror and terrour in the minds of men (which possibly may flow from the former) so that they are ever accounted irksome, direful, and horrible places to abide in; and this common estimation is enough for the scope here, which is to shew what dreadful desolation Rome should fall into, and lye in. Cities, even great cities had need to be humble and holy, it is hard to know what may come on, and what may dwell in the greatest: Cities that once have been the greatest in the world, may now be the proof of this.

The justice of this judgement (though great) is declared, *ver. 3.* two wayes, 1. By the greatness of her sins, in three, 1. fornication; 2. a luxurious and delicious way of living; 3. inticing of others to these sins shamelessly. 2. Her sin is set out by the extent of it, in her making others partake with her: and there are, 1. all Nations; 2. Kings; 3. all Merchants that are made rich by her magnificence: these three are the parties with whom she sinneth. 1. For the sins, we may understand them, 1. spiritually of idolatry and superstitions, pompous worship, as is before said: thus her merchandizing is not the least part of her sin, it must therefore be such a merchandizing as is sinfull. 2. literally, of filthiness, pride, affluence and superfluity of all things in apparel, dwellings, diets, &c. Rome aboundeth in these. 2. For the parties sinning, Nations and Kings, are clearly literally to be understood as before. It is more difficult what is to be understood by Merchants. Certainly they must not at least only be common Merchants: for, 1. they are the great men of the earth, that buy and sell these wares. And, 2. the wares are souls of men, *ver. 14.* And therefore, 3. these Merchants must be understood chiefly, as Merchants of such wares as are vendible or sellable at Rome, and wherein especially its market excels, and goeth beyond other places: and that is not so much in outward commodities, as, 1. they sold pardons, indulgences, Bishopricks, yea Christ, heaven, dispensations, &c. (as it is said, *omnia sunt Romæ venalia*) These make their great men rich. 2. They buy costly things for their own pomp, and the pomp of their worship; and therefore they are called Merchants, who both buy and sell, and they are singularly Merchants beyond others. The righteousness then of this sad judgement appeareth, 1. from the greatness of her superstition, idolatry and superfluity. 2. From her propagating of it to others. 3. From the making a trade of it, so that no calling almost did thrive better than to be a monger of her superstitions, either in carrying something from her, or bringing something to her.

The second voice (from *vers. 4.* to *vers. 21.*) setteth out the same thing, but as by a new witness of that destruction which men easily believed not. 2. This is either the Lord Himself immediately who calleth the people *his, My people*; or, His Ministers mediately by His Authority calling them: His words set out this destruction, 1. by way of exhortation to Gods people, from *vers. 4.* to 9. 2. By way of commination, or foretelling of the lamentation should follow this great desolation amongst her friends, Kings, Merchants, and Ship-masters, to *vers. 20.* 3. By incitation to Gods People to rejoice over her, *vers. 20.* &c. All which sheweth the greatness of the desolation: that, 1. all that would shun the judgement, would flee from it, as Lot did out of Sodom. 2. As it giveth ground of fear to some, so it giveth ground of lamentation to others. 3. Of rejoicing to a third sort, that is, these who have formerly separated from her. It must then be great that maketh and worketh fear, grief and joy so universally.

The exhortation hath two parts with the reasons of them. 1. There is an exhortation to separate from her, *ver. 4.* and 5. which sheweth, that now her ruine is at hand (get you,

saith he, quickly from her, as Moses saith, *Numb. 16. 26.* to the people, to separate from Korah, Dathan, &c. it is borrowed from *Jer. 51. 6.*) and that their delivery approacheth with her ruine and fall. The second exhortation, is, *ver. 6. 7. 8.* and it is an upstirring of Gods people not to be remisse in executing Gods judgements on her according to their callings and stations, as God shall give them opportunity.

Concerning the first exhortation we are to enquire, (beside its scope, which is clear to shew her approaching ruine) 1. What sort of separation this is, which is called for. 2. In matter of fact, if any Godly have been, may be, or are to be in Rome before its destruction? 3. What is the necessity or warrant of separating from Rome? and what more now than before? And why Babylon only is to be separated from, if this be peculiar to her?

Before we answer, we must premit a twofold consideration of Babylon, and being in Babylon. 1. Babylon, or Rome, may be considered meerly as a great City or dominion. 2. As an Ecclesiastick sinfull degenerating party, or apostatized Church of Antichrist: so in the first acceptation, to be in Rome, differeth from the second, which is to be of Rome, as Gods people were in Babylon, yet not of Babylon; lived in the place, but did not partake of their sin. So one may be in Rome two wayes, 1. locally; thus he is not of it as an antichristian Church, nor is this in itself sinfull, if by some circumstances it become not so. 2. One may be in Rome as a member of that Church; thus he is not formally one of Gods people, and if he belong to His Election, he is to be called in due time.

For answer then to the first question, there are three things distinguished, even by Independent Divines [*Vide Norton ad. Apoll. quest. ult.*] 1. there is *Schisma*, that is, a separating from the unity and from the communion of a true Church, whether more or less pure, if it be a true Church; this is simply and alway sinfull, because it is from a true Church: This Schism consisteth not alway in diversity of Doctrine, which is heresie; but in divided practices from the communion of a true Church, as *Augustin contra Faustum, lib. 2. cap. 3.* *Schismaticos facit non diversa fides, sed disrupta communio societas*, so it renteth unity, and is either *negativum schisma*, where is simply a withdrawing, without setting up a new distinct Church; or, positive, when it not only withdraweth, but setteth up another worship, or Church (as the *Novatians* and *Donatists* did) to keep communion only with themselves. And this is called to have *altare contra altare*. 2. There is *separation*, and that is, 1. either in whole, when people withdraw from communion in whole from others, as no Church; or, 2. in part, when they acknowledge them Churches, yet cannot communicate in some things with them (as in the Sacrament with *ubiquitaries*, since that ubiquity sprung up) this is sinfull or lawfull according to the grounds of it. If it be no Church, such as Babel was, a total separation is necessary; or, in part it is lawfull, if it exceed not its ground: but when separation is from a true Church (though with some defects) totally, or beyond that wherein she is corrupted, that is, sinfull, and (as Cotton saith on *Cant. 6.* a condemning as no Church that which Christ accounteth one, and is too much nycery not to keep communion with them, with whom He keepeth communion. Thus it becometh *schisma*.

The third is *secession*, that is, without refusing the communion of another, yet locally to remove upon some urgent or lawful occasion spiritual or temporal, to another or better constitute Church, that is lawfull and is no separation; but may be even from a lawfull Church and pure. The first, to wit, a schism, is neither here called-for, nor is it possible to make a schism with Rome (she not being a true Church which is rent, or from whom the rent is) and the second, to wit, separation and

and that totall, is called for, and was so alway since she became Antichristian, that none continue in her communion, but that they renounce it. The third also is now called-for here, that they would even separate locally from her, as *Lot* did from *Sodom*, or these that were near *Korah*, did from their tents: because, 1. The scope is clear to set out the greatness and suddenness of her ruine: therefore they had need to keep a local distance, as in the examples foresaid. 2. The former separation was alway necessary in heart and practice from that party (and it is like, except it be amongst any yet to be called, was actually before this) but here something more and peculiar to this reason, to wit, her destruction, is called for, which was not alway before required. Separation may be without secession, and secession in changing place without separation in communion; but here both are called for.

For answer to the second, if there shall then be any of Gods people *de facto* in *Rome*; or *quo jure* may they be there till then? *Ans.* In these Conclusions (having distinguished Gods people. 1. In elected, regenerated and called, and elected but un-called.) 1. Many un-called have been and may be in *Rome*, yea even of it, and these are called to separate; for experience telleth us, God hath called many who have been members of her, and may do so still. 2. Many of Gods called people have been in *Rome* locally, but not of it, and have continued long so in her bosome: There are true worshippers in the Temple, *Chap. 11.* even when the outter court is trod on by heathenish Papists, then the Prophets prophesie even in the great city, and God hath a Temple and Church even where Antichrist sitteth, though his Congregation be not that Church, even as the Lord had his Word, Prophets, and People at old *Babylon*, captive, when the face of Worship was overturned in *Judah*; so in this *Babylon*, He keepeth still his Word, Baptism (as in the former he did Circumcision) and a Ministry that was never lost, but all the forty two moneths of Antichrists reign the Prophets prophesie, though in sackcloth. Hence in all the Universal expressions of Antichrists dominion, still they are excepted (*Chap. 13.* and *17.*) whose names are written in the Book of life: and (*Chap. 7.*) an hundred forty and four thousand are sealed, who (*Chap. 14.*) are found on mount *Zion*, even before light in *Luthers* time brake forth. And it may possibly be, that some sinfully (as some of the people in *Babylon* did) have not made a secession from *Rome*, and these parts, though they have formerly separated from her communion: or, otherways by their callings (as *Obadiab* was engaged with *Ahab*) being intangled to live still. This voice putteth them to it, not to lodge a night in it, for they know not when Gods judgement may seize upon it; yet she is *Ebel* and these in her are Gods people, even then: but now when the Gospel breaketh out, and her judgement approacheth, they are called not only to separate from her, but to remove out of her and expect her judgement.

For the third necessity or warrant of separating, it is grounded on these, 1. *She is Babel* and ye are my people, and there is no communion between light and darknes, Christ and Antichrist: this giveth the great ground, she is but your oppressor, *Babylon*, not your Mother the Church. 2. Ye cannot shun her sins, if ye stay; not only should ye own me in separating your selves when ye are called (which belongeth to the first ground, that is, to confesse with the mouth, by profession, as well as to believe with the heart) but if ye stay ye are still in danger of snares; yea sometimes in less or more, are partaking of them (as *Joseph* did in swearing by *Pharaohs* life at the Court of *Egypt*). And by this it may also appear, that many living in such places are engaged and ensnared in many things, that at a greater distance they would be liberated of.

If any ask, May not one abide in *Rome* now, and not be a partaker of her sins, more than before? *Ans.* The hazard

is greater now. 1. They have a retiring place and a standard for truth set up, that they should now follow. 2. They have Gods call and invitation to come out; and though he was a Sanctuary to them in their wilderness-state while the set time of their captivity lasted, yet when he openeth the door, that is not to be expected so confidently from him. 3. *Babel* groweth still more corrupt, and never more than since *Trent* added to all her former abominations. 4. Because *Romes* judgement hasteneth: and though they keep themselves free of many of her sins, yet they may share of her temporal wrath, as *Lots* family was in hazard, had not the Lord removed it from *Sodom*. A third reason of secession, is the coming great plague, so that God, who had long spared, was, by judging her, to make it appear he had forgotten nothing, and now her sins being come to an height, her judgement shall delay no longer, and this presseth a local secession.

Hence it followeth, 1. That it is no schism to quit fellowship with *Rome*, she being no wife to the Lamb, is therefore no mother to his Children; she giveth them payson for sincere milk, by corrupting the truth of the Gospel, and not suffering them to feed upon the Truth: she hath been condemning, persecuting and destroying the true worshippers for many generations together, and would have no fellowship with any without the beasts character; therefore is there a necessity of separating, as was said to the Witnesses, *Chap. 11.* Come up hither, and here, Come out of her. 2. It followeth also, that folks not only may quit *Rome*, but of duty they should do it, in obedience to Christs call, and they would try their warrant that go there for curiosity, seeing here is a command to quit it; Who are they that know what night or day this horrible judgement will be executed? It were dreadful curiosity to be found there then. 3. It followeth, that where God warranteth separation, it is from a company that is no Church, and must be supposed a *Babel*; and therefore there is no separation allowed by him from a true Church, seeing this is a proof of his disclaiming her to be a Church, to command them to separate from her. Therefore here is *Babylon* contradistinguished from his People, who are called to come out of her: which supposeth that he calleth none of his to separate from such as are his. Its one thing to withdraw from civil conversing with particular wicked men, another thing to separate from Gods Church for its defects.

There is therefore this observable in separating and withdrawing, that we are to keep less fellowship in civil things with a Brother that is a Church-member and is gross, than with one that is without, and not a member, as the Apostle writeth, *2. Cor. 5. 10.* but we may and should, on the other side, keep Church fellowship with a true Church though in many things faulty and corrupt, whereas we may not at all with an idolatrous company in their worship. Hence, in that same Epistle to the *Corinthians*, going to, and eating in Idols temples, or at their feasts, was so much condemned; yet communicating with the Church of *Corinth*, or living as a member of it, (though corrupt both in doctrine and practice) was never found fault with as to worship: for, it is clear, that that of not eating with an offending Brother, looketh only to civil fellowship, because it is such a fellowship that is condemned with them, as is allowed to heathens, which certainly is such, if our Churches therefore be Christs Churches, as sometimes the favourers of separation grant, there can be no separation from them without turning to a schism.

The second exhortation may be read by way of prophesie; or, because the former is by way of precept, so is this to be understood also, *Reward her*, *ver. 6.* inviting them to a just zeal in recompensing her. It seemeth to be borrowed from *Psal. 137. 8.* *Jer. 51. 35.* and considering that the Lord here calleth for it, and that according to every ones station and place,

from



from Kings in their place, and Subjects in theirs, there can be no question of the warrantableness of it. It is, that all (as they shall be called) who have seen *Romes* whoredom, shall, or should be ready in holy zeal, by doing or praying, to concur for executing Gods judgments on her. This word, *reward*, implyeth a just meeting and recompence. She did first the wrong, and now in justice they do but repay. Those to whom it is spoken, are the persons exhorted formerly to come out of her, to wit, Gods People, who formerly suffered by her, as the expression of retaliation cleareth.

The justice and dreadfulnes of this stroke, is comprehended in three reasons, annexed in three expressions, 1. *Render unto her double as she hath served you.* Which words not only hold out their recompencing of her to be just, (*Lex talionis*) but also great. So double is, 1. very much, *Isa. 40. 1, 2.* 2. Double, that is, not above her deserving; for, that will not be poured-out in eternity, but it is much or more than ever she for all her malice was able to effectuate on you. She would fain have utterly destroyed you, so as to have left no memory of you, but could not get it done: but now wholly make ye her desolate; for, justice will count in her judgment, not according to her practice in what she was able to effectuate, but according to her sin, and the mark she aimed at; which being against God, deserveth more than they were able to do. Therefore it is not unjust with God, to make these His instruments (even before men) to render double to her in temporal miseries, being all within what was due to

her. The expression of *filling the cup*, is to the same purpose.

A second thing aggregating her judgment, is, That as she getteth double, as the fruit of her malice, So let her have (saith the Lord) judgment according to her pride and haughtinesse; which being very great, her judgment cannot but be so, seeing here it is both the cause and measure thereof. And that her pride is great, there is a word cited out of *Isa. 47.* and applied to her for evincing it. This is *vers. 7.*

The third expression, is, *vers. 8.* hanging these plagues on her former sins, *Therefore, &c.* Aggregating them, 1. that they came thick and many together. 2. *Sudden*, in one day. 3. *Unexpected and irrecoverable, utterly burnt*, another destruction than ever she saw before. And because it is incredible-like, as things have for a long time stood, a word is added to confirm it, *for, strong is the Lord God who judgeth her:* It is not men, nor yet Angels, though both be instruments; but it is the Lords controversie, and the judgment is His. Therefore believe it will come, and be encouraged ye to do this work who shall be called to it; for, the Lord is engaged in it, and cannot be over-powered. This being the Lords quarrel, and to be executed by Saints once wronged by her, it cleareth, 1. That it is the same war with, *Chap. 17. 14.* 2. That *Rome* is in a present guilt when she is destroyed. 3. That it is not executed by Antichrist, but by such as had suffered formerly by her; and afterward, (*vers. 20.*) are commanded to rejoyce over her.

## LECTURE II.

*Verf. 9. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication, and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning:*

10. *Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city, for in one hour is thy judgment come.*

11. *And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her, for no man buyeth her merchandise any more.*

12. *The merchandise of gold and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble,*

13. *And cinamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oyl, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.*

14. *And the fruits that thy soul lusted after, are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly, are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.*

15. *The merchants of these things which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off, for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,*

16. *And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls.*

17. *For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every ship-master, and all the company in ships, and sailers, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,*

18. *And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city?*

19. *And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea, by reason of her costliness, for in one hour is she made desolate.*

20. Rejoyce over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her.

21. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great milstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

22. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee: and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee: and the sound of a milstone shall be heard no more at all in thee.

23. And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee: and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth: for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

24. And in her was found the bloud of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

**F**olloweth now the second part of this Angels discourse whereby the sad desolation of Rome is foretold, to wit, the sad lamentation of all her friends; it shall be so great and dreadful, as to affect and astonish them all: This is the scope, which is clear, and we shall insist the less in the words.

The parties brought in lamenting, are of three sorts, most especially concerned, who are sufficient as to the scope. 1. *Kings*, ver. 9, 10. then *Merchants*, ver. 11. 3. *Shipmen and Traders by Sea*, ver. 17. All these shall joyn in lamenting, but for their several ends.

The *Kings*, that is, some of the *Kings*, Chap. 17. who shall not hate her with the rest, but shall continue favourers of the beast, till the battel of *Armageddon*, they shall lament this desolation, not acknowledging Gods justice, but affected with their own particular, and otherwise blinded. By which it is clear, 1. That not all the ten horns, Chap. 17. but some of them, shall hate the whore. 2. That after *Romes* destruction, many shall remain unsatisfied with it, even when the prophesie is fulfilled, which saith, that the fulfilling of prophesies maketh them not palpably to be so where there is prejudice formerly drunken-in. 3. It saith, that *Romes* desolation will be sad to many *Kings* that are enemies to Christ, and therefore not be executed by them.

These *Kings* are such as have been partakers of her sin, and have been in love with her external pomp and delicate way, now they have one common lamentation with the rest, *Alace alace*, that sheweth affection in them, and desolation on her, that they lament for. 1. In its greatness, she is burned. 2. In its terribleness, they stand afar off for fear: they cannot or dare not help her, though they lament her. 3. In its greatness and unexpectedness, that mighty city is destroyed in one hour. And seeing these *Kings* both partake of her fornications and give their power to the beast, it must follow, that these go together. and therefore this sin, for which *Rome* is ruined, is Antichrists sin, and that defection hath been derived to all the Nations from it, and by it, before its destruction, and that for a long time, which hath intoxicated or bewitched them so to effect her.

If it be asked, why *Kings* so much lament, and are affected? *Ans.* Many of them, or some of them, are still drunken with that wine of her fornications, and cannot lay by that pomp of external worship, whereby their magnificence hath opportunity to kyth, and they love a natural formal way of worship, and cannot abide the simplicity and spirituality of the Gospel. 2. They have been for a long time entertained with counterfeit respects from that Court, receiving titles and privileges from her that have sometimes been though much of, such, as to be

*P<sup>ro</sup>tektor Ecclesie* to the Roman Emperour, *Rex Catholicus* to Spain, *Rex Christianissimus* to France, *Defensores Ecclesie* to the *Helvetians*, *Defensor Fidei* to the *Kings of England*, sanctified Swords and Banners, &c. These vanities are now taken away from them. 3. All men (especially great men) love an easie and lazie form of worship, such as Popery is, to get dispensations to their oaths, unlawful incestuous Marriages (as often many Popish *Kings* do, Spain with his Neece, Poland with his Brothers wife for the time) Pardons, and Indulgences for money for their greatest sins. These things the *Kings* love well, and will be in heaven as soon as any, if money will do it, and cannot abide to want these things that give them liberty, when there is hope by some money to recover all. 4. Enimty at Christs way and yoke, They see her going down maketh way for the flourishing and spreading of the true Religion that they still were suppressing, and that galleth them. These reasons are from their interest. 5. Possibly also the fear of sharing in that judgement, they being joynly someway engaged with her, it may affect them, and that fear maketh them stand afar off.

The next who lament, are the *Merchants*, who have their *Alace*, (ver. 16.) also upon these common grounds (*i. e.* the ruine of an excellent outward glorious City) In a general way of pity, especially considering that she, that was just now gallant in all pomp, is suddenly brought to this desolation; yet the ground is also more peculiar, they by their losse do lose their trade and gain in merchandizing; and thus their particular sticketh to them. Therefore *Merchants* are in two wayes In this lamentation to be understood, 1. Literally, the *Merchants* of those sorts of wares which *Rome* in its greatnesse and luxury made use of; and that for two ends, first, In their pomp and civil outward grandour. These four are mentioned, 1. all things serving for decking the body gorgeously, as ver. 12. *Gold, silver, precious Stones, pearls, fine linen, scarlet, purple, &c.* 2. All things that adorn a house, as, *Sweet-wood, ivory, vessels of precious wood, brasse, iron* ibid. ver. 12. 3. All manner of things for pampering the body, and the table, and for savour, as *Spices, cinnamon, odours, wine, sheep, oxen, wheat, &c.* ver. 13. 4. All necessities for outward pomp and equipage in peace and war, that is, *Servants, horses, and chariots*: In a word, whatever delicious thing was desirable. These were all much made use of at *Rome*, and are still by their Ecclesiastick Princes. Secondly, they are much made use of in their external service, and manner of worship, *Gold and Silver* in their Images and decorament of Churches, *Purple* to their Cardinals; *fine Linen* about their Relicks and Masse, Tables or Altars; *Oyl* in many things, &c. Thus *Merchants* that were sure how to get these things sold at a good rate at *Rome*, are now disappointed



of their gain; these things sell not so well, and they lament for it, as it is said concerning *Tyrus*, *Ezek. 27.* but this is not all. This sort of merchandise is still of worth, *Gold, silver, &c.* and though *Rome* be destroyed they might have recourse elsewhere to their market; it must therefore be some other sort of merchandise and merchants who live especially by these wares of *Rome*, and whose merchandise and trade faileth, when it faileth and is so peculiar to *Rome*, it is clear; for, this merchandise is of souls of men, distinct from bodies (for the words, *souls* and *bodies*, in the Original, differ in the case, to shew that one thing is not understood by both) that is, selling souls out of Purgatory, and sending them by it at their pleasure, and treading with their Dispensations, Indulgences, &c. And by her Merchants then must be understood their Cardinals and great Church-men, who are (*ver. 23.*) called the great men of the earth (and such a greatness is a part of *Romes* sin and a cause of her ruine) whose trade is now cryed down at *Romes* destruction, none buyeth their wares now when their vanity is discovered (as in a great part hath been since *Luthers* dayes) These wares are such as are peculiar to *Rome*, these make their great men rich; and therefore this decay maketh them cry out, *Alace, alace!* This is merchandizing of false teachers, spoken of 2 *Pet. 2. 3.* who profess themselves shepherds, but feed themselves and not the flock, *Ezek. 34.* This must be the merchandizing and the Merchants here understood; for, great men of the earth, are not for common wares, and this trade is pitched-on here as sinful in respect of them, as committing fornication with her was in the Kings.

Having set down the Merchants (who are the great Clergymen) their lamentation for their temporal loss and hazard also, to wit, both *lucrum cessans*, and *damnum emergens*, (which two are the great grounds of lamentation among the men of the world,) He proceedeth (*ver. 15.*) to the lamentation of the Ship-men and under-rowers of *Peters Bark*, (as they call it) or inferior Clergy-men and Sub-ministers of the Church of *Rome*, who have their standing by this trade, *ver. 17.* and their lamentation is much more, as having a more sensible touch of their own misery in hers, *They cast dust on their heads* (possibly being more blinded than others) and regrave the desolation of that City that had no equal in her pomp, and hath now no equal in her ruine; yet so they lament, as it appeareth what pincheth them most, *She made all that traded in ships, rich, ver. 19.* not simply all, who traded in outward things, but all her dependers in Abbacies and Convents, Priests, Jesuites, and all inferior orders and officers, that were servants to this stately City in her merchandise, and providing for her venting of her wares, and carrying them through the world, and bringing back returns for the adorning of her again; all in that Sea are made rich: So the Merchants suit with the wares, the Ship-men and Sea must be suitable to both, employing a trade and traffick of *Rome*, sinful to her, and enriching to her servants and merchants occupied in it. These Ship-mens standing dependeth on *Rome*, and her ruine is theirs: for, all of that sort live by her trade, and that is the change of her Merchants: from which it is clear, that that Sea is not literally to be taken here, but so as serveth to this Antichristian trade and end of merchandizing in the forms, laws and Ecclesiastick State of that Whore and her Clergy, who are most useful in that employment and made up by it. The Orders are the ships and men that trade; The Sea is the spirituality under which notion they trade. Hence also we may see what trade enricheth *Rome* most (to wit, of souls) and what holdeth on its Merchants, to wit, self interest; it giveth them such a being as they have in worldly esteem and grandour: and what wonder it be sad to them to part with such a trade?

The third part of the Angels denunciation followeth, *ver. 20.* setting out the greatness and fulness of this ruine by the

great ground of joy it should give, and justly give to all Gods people formerly oppressed by her. The words are by an *Apostrophe* spoken to others than these he was speaking to in the words before. By *Heavens, Apostles* and *Prophets* may figuratively be understood the great glory God shall have out of *Romes* destruction, so that it shall affect heaven and be ground to them of joy; or, rather by *heaven* is meant the Church, so they come in as obeying this, *Chap. 19.* and they sing, And by *Apostles* and *Prophets* is understood their successors, who are to be in the Church unto the end. The reason why they should joy, is, because in this judgement God hath had respect to them, to vindicate them and to liberate them, and is to take vengeance on her for them. If it be asked, how she, to wit, *Rome antichristian*, was guilty of the blood of the Prophets and Apostles, *ver. 20.* and all Saints, *ver. 24.* Or, 2. How they are to rejoice at her destruction? *Answ. 1.* She is guilty of the Apostles blood as of the Prophets blood (though she never actually shed the blood of any of them) in these there. 1. because there is but one body, and who wrongeth any of the members on that common account, as such, he wrongeth the head and all the rest; for, they have one cause. 2. Because they who wrong one, they virtually wrong all; and their malice would reach to all, if they had them, as *Matth. 23. 31.* ye are the children of them that killed the prophets, for ye shall slay me, & would have done so to them, if ye had had them. 3. They are accessory in serving themselves heirs to the judgements of all persecuters, who have all one lot, and who come last in on the same score with the former; so is the generation that Christ lived in, guilty of all the blood was shed from *Abels* time (*Matth. 23.*) unto that. For answer to the second, they rejoice not carnally or selfishly; But, 1. for that they see the glory of Gods justice manifested. 2. That they and especially the truth they suffered for, and the threatenings they had pronounced in his name, do appear now to be vindicated and ratified, and God owneth them, which for a long time was not believed in the world: Thus he hath judged your judgement, that is, there was still a controversie between them and *Babylon*, God cometh and now decideth for them, and declareth it was truth they suffered for, and not error. 3. That by this mean, way is made to the spreading of Christs Kingdom, the snare is removed from many a poor soul. This is joyful to them, and upon this account they formerly prayed for it, and this addeth to their joy, when God now heareth them, and maketh it appear He heareth them.

The last part of the Chapter followeth, from *ver. 21.* by the second Angel, who by word and sign confirmeth this final and utter destruction of *Rome*. The sign goeth first, the word next, and the cause of it, is set down in the close. The sign is a mighty Angel taking up a great stone, like a millstone, and casting in the sea. So that as this heavy stone, which is thrown down by a mighty Angel to the bottom of the sea, cannot but suddenly fall and not arise, so sure shall this fall of *Babylon* or *Romes* destruction be, and that with violence, and she shall no more be found. This is the Angels exposition, *ver. 21.* as taken from *Jer. 51. 63. 64.* and spoken of old *Babylon*. He proceedeth to amplify this desolation, *ver. 22, 23.* out of *Jer. 25. 10, 11.* where the sad desolation of *Judah* is prophesied in these (almost the same) tearms. 1. There shall be no more chearfulness and mirth there. 2. No tradsmen useful for mans life there, 3. No millstone, or provision meet for entertaining mans life there. 4. No light of a candle, or what is comfortable, but absolute darkness there. 5. No marrying or chearful solemnity of that kind, without which there can be no continuing city. These particulars are instanced, according to the manner of the Prophets, to set out desolation, and its continuing in the highest degree.

The causes follow, and they are three great ones, the first is,

is, ver. 23. for thy merchants were the great men of the earth : whereby it is clear, 1. These are not common traders, but such as become by this trade to be, and are accounted, great men on the earth, though not in heaven. 2. That it must be something sinful and peculiarly sinful to *Rome*, which is not to be found elsewhere, it being given here as the first cause of their judgement, which could not be of ordinary merchandizing, but that in an extraordinary way she employed such men (and made it a trade honourable even for the best) in such things as were sinful, wherein even Princes thought it honourable to be employed, and these employed were thought so; for though it be borrowed from the traffick of *Tyrus*, *Ezek.* 27. yet it is to be applyed spiritually, as many other things in this prophesie, not to temporal wares, but spiritual: this being *Johns* way (as before was observed) to borrow expressions from the Prophets their setting forth of temporal evils, and to apply them to spiritual.

The second cause is her *sorceries* whereby many were deceived which is to be understood spiritually also, as the former of enxying or bewitching, (*Gal.* 3. 1.) to idolatry and her superstitious worship; though literally *sorcery*, wherein *Rome* abounded, is not to be secluded, as neither in the former the literal trading where such was.

The third sin is persecution and bloodshed, and that of all sorts, Ministers and People; yea, she being the last persecuter and head of all the persecutions throughout other Kingdoms whether by Inquisitions, Massacres or Wars, she is found justly guilty of all (upon the reasons given before) and it is now repayed on her, though others will not be freed of the judgement.

These are the sins, now if *Rome* be this *Babylon*, (as adversaries confess) these sins must either be the sins of heathen *Rome* or of popish *Rome*, or of *Rome* under their feigned Antichrist that must procure this judgement (for, its ruine is not to be separated from its cause) but they cannot be sins of heathen *Rome* that procureth the ruine of that city, which is irreparable such as is here: for, 1. the sins here procuring this judgement are such as *Rome* is to be actually taken in the guilt of, and many presently are acting in it; but that idolatry and persecution of old *Rome* is broken off long since. 2. This ruine is on an whore; and therefore such sins as belong to one making defection, which cannot be applyed to heathen *Rome*; for this is whoring *Rome* that is here. 3. These sins are a following step of idolatry and persecution that was to be on the earth, to wit, Antichrist after the heathenish persecution ceased, as was cleared, *Chap.* 6. for Saints are to be killed after that fifth seal, which is to be performed by the beast, *Chap.* 13. and 17. and here it is closed.

4. These sins for which *Rome* is destroyed, are the sins wherewith *Babylon* is formerly charged, *Chap.* 17. and whereof the world was guilty then, but these were not the sins of heathen *Rome*, but of Antichrist, neither is it very like that *Rome* so long time after will be punished for faults in thousands of years before, or at least many hundreds. It followeth then, 1. that

that city *Rome* is by this prophesie especially holden out to be a seat of antichristian tyranny, when she is found guilty of all this blood; otherwise she would not be so singularly plagued with him and for him. 2. That *Rome* presently must be thus under this guiltiness, and that its present practice is the continuing of this guilt; for we cannot consider *Rome* guilty thus, but as either under heathen persecuters, and this is not the guilt, for she is plagued for a present guilt, and taken in the act of whoring, for Gods punishment is not on the walls of a town, where such sins once were committed; but on persons, principally, presently sinning, or continuing former guiltiness, and long forborne, and on the walls for their cause; or it must be considered as guilty under an Antichrist to come, and to suffer the ruine by him; (if so he be to come as they say) but this cannot be said either: for, 1. they say, *Rome* is not to be his seat, but *Jerusalem*, therefore this judgement is not due peculiarly to *Rome*, if that defection be not singularly acted and plotted by it. 2. They say, *Rome* is to be destroyed by him, or by the ten Kings before him, but that destruction would be suffering innocently, and not justly for her sins, as here. 3. This judgement of *Rome* is given as an evidence of Gods justice, and to continue a time, as a ground of rejoycing to the saints, and as a ground of lamentation to the Kings, who supported the beast and committed fornication with this whore: that must therefore be a longer time before the end of the world than they make it, and cannot be by Antichrist (as they say) but for him that its destroyed; for that would be no rejoycing to the Saints, but mourning to them and joy to him and his. Seeing then it is not *Rome*, one of these wayes considered, it must be *Rome* popish: for an other state of it; is not alleaged by them; yea, it is this *Rome*, and this destruction upon such causes yet to come: for it is to be done by Kings that in *Johns* time had not dominion, but were to receive it, and after to give it for a time to the beast, and were to commit whoredom with this whore, and then after that to hate her and destroy her. Again it appeareth here also, that many will stick in their doting, to lament *Rome*, even after its ruine, which certainly could not be, if they understood this Prophecie. It is no marvel then it be dark to many as yet, who stick so to that Antichrist then as if he were not Antichrist; so it is like, many will defend this *Babylon* at its ruine, as if it were not the *Babylon* spoken of here. The Jews still reject clear Prophecies of Christ and of their destruction for rejecting him. Prophecies then after their fulfilling are clear to such whose eyes God openeth only, and are not discerned by all, as Papists speak. 3. Hence also we may gather, it is but foolish pity that is shown on *Romes* greatness in her self or pendicles, such as Abbacies, Monasteries, &c. Gods justice should be acknowledged on them, and none should thus lament over them. 4. It must follow then that the way of worship now at *Rome*, must be fornication and sorcery; their executions, persecutions, their selling of Pardons, &c. the merchandizing condemned here.

## LECTURE I.

### CHAP. XIX.

Verf. 1. **A**Nd after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluja, salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God:

2. For true and righteous are his judgements, for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.



3. And again they said Alleluja, and her smoke rose up for ever and ever.
4. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen, Alleluja.
5. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.
6. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluja: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.
7. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come and his wife hath made her self ready.

He scope of this Chapter is more fully to explain the events of the sixth vial, Chap. 16. which was more abruptly left there, without shewing the event of that battel of Armageddon, which is supplied here. That it doth belong to the sixth vial, (beside what was said Chap. 16.) doth appear from these things, 1. That this is subjoyned to the exposition of the fifth vial, Chap. 18. and includeth other events not on the seat of the beast, but on the beast himself, who surviveth his seat, and is placed before the exposition of the seventh vial, the object whereof is not the beast (as in this Chapter) and his adherents only, but Satans kingdom indefinitely, who is taken (Chap. 20.) and casten into the lake, where the beast and false prophet are before him, as being cast in there by this sixth vial. This then belonging to an event after the fifth, and before the seventh, it must be applyed to the sixth, by which, and under which, the beast must end before the seventh come, as his throne did by the fifth.

2. It is clear that the event of this battel, described here, is the event of the same battel, whereof the preparation is set down, Chap. 16. under the sixth vial: It must therefore belong to it; for all these vials bring judgement on the beast: and if this event belong not to the sixth vial but the preparation only which was Chap. 16. then it cannot bring a plague on him; for, the plague consisteth not in preparation to the battel, but in the cross event of it to him, which this Chapter setteth down, and mentioneth nothing of his preparing for it, because that was done, Chap. 16. but proceedeth to the event, which was suspended there in its discovery. That sixth vial contained two notable effects, one shewing the increase of the Church, and a notable accession to her; the second shewing the rage of Antichrist at that, answerable to which this nineteenth Chapter hath two parts, 1. Of exulting at these glad tydings, unto ver. 10. 2. Of the beasts overthrow and his helpers, from ver. 11. to the end. That which is casten-in, ver. 10. is not propheticall, but the record of a particular of Johns carriage, and the Angels. whereby way is made from one part of the explanation to the other.

The Song hath three parts, The first is more general, respecting the former deliverance, ver. 1, 2, 3, and 4. The second is more particular, respecting, as the ground of it, the present state of the Church, and a more special way of Christs reigning in her, from ver. 5, to ver. 8. Thirdly, This ground of joy is more fully explained and confirmed, ver. 8, 9.

The first part expresseth the Churches rejoycing over Romes destruction, and a special invitation they give to the Jews to praise God with them, answerable to that invitation, *Isai.* 2. 5. The second sheweth what welcome they shall give them when they shall come in, so both do look some way to the Jews calling, as was shown Chap. 16. and is so to be applyed. The Gentiles now taking occasion, when this stumbling-block of Popery is

taken out of the way, to stir up and provoke the Jews to joyn with them. This agreeth well to the time of the Jews calling, which must be before the end. 2. It agreeth well to these prophecies, *Isaiah* 2. 5. and *Micah* 4. 3, 4, 5. and *Isaiah* chap. 24. where such exhortations are foretold. 3. It suiteth well with these phrases here of *Alleluja* in hebrew, because it is spoken to them, which in former songs is not used. 4. That these made ready, are the *Lambs wife*, as having a former interest in him and that peculiarly he reigneth, now when they come in, as *Isai.* 24. ver. 23. All which could not be well said without them.

The first Song hath two parts, 1. Of many in heaven, as it were more promiscuously. 2. Of the Elders and Beasts, more orderly, ver. 4. By the first is understood the joy that shall be in heaven amongst all the Saints in the Church militant in their private stations. By the second is understood the solemn acknowledging of God and giving of him praise in the Congregation. By these in heaven we understand these who (ver. 5.) are called *All that fear God, small and great*; which taketh in especially these who are so accounted here on earth in the militant Church, which is often called *Heaven*: It will be no error to take it properly also, there being joy at the conversion of one, much more at such an accession as this; Their joy is in a vision in heaven, set out to John here. The second circumstance, is the time of this joy, *After these things*, implying not only the order of Johns seeing, but the order of succeeding, to wit, after Romes destruction, and the lamentation of her friends, this Song ariseth. If any ask, Why this Song is after their lamentation? These two reasons may be given, 1. Spiritual grounds of joy affect Saints more slowly than temporal grounds of loss do men of the world; the one is sooner sensible of this, than the other of that. 2. Because this joy hath not only respect to *Babylons* ruine in it self, but to the events of the Churches enlargement, that was to follow the removing of that stumbling-block out of the way: therefore it is reserved to begin the event of the sixth vial.

The Song of the Saints, or Church, in general, is, 1. generally propounded, ver. 1. 2. The grounds of the joy laid down, ver. 2. and confirmed, ver. 3. The first word is *Alleluja*, and it is an Hebrew word, of *Hallel* and *Jah*, and is on the matter that same with *praise God*, ver. 5. for so they answer *Hallelujah*. It is often the beginning and close of many Psalms, it is not used out of any superstitious account of syllables or letters in this word, as if they were more holy than others; but that their multiplying of Hebrew words and praises in them, or exhortations to praise, may now suit with the present scope, which is to point out the increase of Christs praise now after Romes destruction by the Hebrews; and there can be no other reason why it is so often repeated here, being in no other place mentioned, where Songs are used, and yet some peculiar reason thereof may warrantably be enquired after.

More particularly, the praise is expressed in four words, rendring

unto God *Salvation, glory, &c.* which were before (*Chap. 5.*) spoken of. In a word, it is, the praise of all those be to Him who alone deserveth it.

The grounds of all this praise are, *ver. 2.* In general, *His judgements are true*, that is, His threatnings are fulfilled; or, what is threatened cometh to passe, and taketh hold of folks as well as His mercies: so (*Ezek. 1. 6.*) His word of threatening stiketh to a people, when the Prophets who did threaten are gone. And as they are *true*, so they are *righteous*, and not inflicted but on just grounds that will stop the mouths of all His censurers. Both these are proven in this great instance of *judging the whore*, who was justly condemned in that she *corrupted the earth*, and deluded the world with her abominations: and truth kythed in it, in that by it He shew Himself the avenger of much innocent blood shed by her, which vengeance He had often threatned against her, and now He had performed it.

The repetition for confirmation followeth, *ver. 3.* and again they said, *Alleluja*, 1. to shew it was no passing fitt, but that they continued in the practice of that duty, and under the conviction of their obligation to it, and were withall hearty in it. 2. To shew they were not soon satisfied in performing this duty: for, they fall to it over and over again; and therefore they stir up all, and vent it in an exhortation to all to joyn with them: An heart rightly thankful, is not soon satisfied with its own praise. The ground is further illustrated, that *Romes judgement* is irrecoverable and great, yea, perpetual; therefore they praise as being put to continue in it, by the continuance of that ground; for *her smoke* is continual, *rising up for ever and ever*.

Their solemn thanksgiving, is, *ver. 4.* *The Elders and beasts*, (signifying People and Ministers, as we shew, *Chap. 4.*) they concur solemnly by falling down joynly, (which is to worship publicly) and putting to their seal in two words to the former praise, *Amen*, that is, so be it; or, He is well worthy to whom it should be given. Let it be so, in a confident wish and prayer, and *Alleluja*, they can expresse no more, but count God worthy, and invite others (especially the Jews, for whose sake this is in Hebrew) to give God praise.

The second part of the Song, which is in reference to the Jews calling especially, followeth from *ver. 5.* to *ver. 8.* There is, 1. the party exhorting. 2. The party exhorted. 3. The exhortation it self. 4. The grounds of it. And, 5. obedience thereunto, which is a part of the Song in general.

The party exhorting, is, *A voice from the Throne*, that is, from Heaven, or from the Sanctuary, representing Ministers serious pressing of people to rejoyce and be glad in this joyful event, and to praise God for it; or, it is the voice of Jesus Christ, calling God His God as He is Mediatour; or, of an Angel, having his warrant, as by *ver. 8, 9, 10.* appeareth in his refusing worship from *John*, if the party speaking here be the same that *John* falleth down before there.

The parties exhorted to this duty, are *Gods Servants*, called afterward *those that fear Him both small and great*, that is, all His house who acknowledge Him as Lord and Master: for, though all creatures some way be His servants, *Psal. 119. 91.* yet here they are taken more properly, either for such as are by Covenant His servants, by tie and profession separated to be such unto God, as all *Israel*, even the children were, *Lev. 23. 47, &c.* Or, more especially, for Believers, who by their practice manifest their respecting of this obligation in giving Him fear, and that of all sorts, high and low, strong and weak, &c.

The exhortation is to *Praise*, and that *our God*, which wanteth not an emphasis in praising more than in other duties, as *Deut. 28.* the great and dreadful Name of the Lord your God: that maketh praise and all duties to come kindly from

us, and be accepted graciously by Him, when it is founded upon a Covenant-relation: thus it is not only praise but so qualified in its object, *our God*, that is called-for.

The obedience followeth which expresseth the grounds, *ver. 6, 7.* There are many that go about the work, therefore it is called *like the noise of many waters, and like great thunderings*: not to hold out confusion or terribleness in their Song, but greatness in it and earnestness in them who sing, it is loudness in their Song: which in its matter is distinctly set down from two grounds (beside their concurring in the former *Alleluja*, and inviting others to concur) The first ground, is, *the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*. This is not Gods ordinary sovereignty, whereby He guideth all the world, (for that hath no interruption) but this is the manifesting of that sovereignty at special times and in special events in the guiding of His Church. This, as before men, seemeth sometimes to be eclipsed, as where it is said, (*Chap. 11.*) that God hath taken to Him His power and reigneth, which He seemed for a time to neglect. This then is understood here: for, this being a peculiar expression of praise, it looketh to a peculiar manner of His appearing and reigning: Which is two wayes spoken of, 1. When it is evidenced in signal overthrowes of His enemies, so Antichrists overthrow is an evidence that God reigneth, *Chap. 11.* whose dominion seemed before to be obscured while he stood. See *Psal. 59. 13.* 2. When there is an accession to the Church, as *Chap. 11.* when Nations become the Lords and His Christs; and more especially, His reclaiming of *Israel*, and appointing *David* their King over them, is looked on as a special part and evidence of His dominion, as *Isa. 24. 23. Ezek. 34. Micah 4. 7.* This is when they shall cry *Hosanna*, unto Him who cometh in the Name of the Lord: for, that being a part of Christs promised Kingdom, there is some seeming want in His outward sovereign reign, so long as this is wanting, Now, say they, *Alleluja*, the Lord reigneth over Jews as well as Gentiles: for as the in-coming of the Gentiles is a more eminent step of His reign and marriage than was before, when the Jews were only the Church; so that the Jews accession to the Church, is as another remarkable step (when they shall be called-in) beyond what was when the Gentiles were only His Church.

The exhortation is renewed, *ver. 7.* with a new ground, *let us be glad and rejoyce*: it is a duty and a great part of praise, even to rejoyce in God; it honoureth him. The other word proveth this that relateth to God, *let us give honour to him*. This accession is acknowledged to be from Him, and therefore the honour of it is due to Him. The first part setteth out the inward affection in praising; the second, the outward expressing of it to Gods honour. The reason is twofold, which is subjoyned, yet to one scope, 1. *For the marriage of the Lamb is come*. Christs marriage with His Church is three wayes spoken of in Scripture, 1. As it cometh by the offer of the Gospel, wherein many are espoused and by faith engaged to Him, 2 *Corinth. 11. 2.* Thus it hath been even since Christs dayes, His marriage was then and many were and are invited, *Mat. 22. &c.* 2. As it is consummated and perfected at the end, when the Queen is brought to the King, and abideth with Him for ever, *Psal. 45. 3.* There is an intervening step, when the fulness of the Gentiles and the Jews shall be brought in together, that is, marrying eminently; because it is the grafting-in again of the old Branches and the bringing back of a divorced Wife, for a time forsaken. And because then eminently there will be an accepting of the bargain of Grace; on the marriage terms, as if what passed had been but wooing in respect of this following enlargement: And as in Scripture there is a threefold Resurrection, 1. by the Gospel, which was and is alway, *Job. 5. The dead shall hear the voice, &c. Eph. 5. v. 14.* Secondly, at the end, which is general, as the first is particular



particular. 3. When *Jews* and *Gentiles* shall come in together, which (*Rom. 11.*) is as life from the dead, which is between the two former. So may we consider the Churches marriage with Christ, which is the same with the Resurrection, in a threefold consideration also. It is not the first nor the second marriage that is mentioned here; for it is in a singular way such a marriage as was not before, and the last end is not intended here: for, that last marriage, doth not comprehend an accession to the militant Church, as this doth here, going alongst with the Popes overthrow before the end. It is therefore that of the fulness of the *Gentiles* incoming, and the *Jews* re-ingrafting especially, who are here called his *wife*: not as all Believers are, but even in some respect such before their calling. For it is *His wife* He is to be married with, which is peculiar to the *Jews*, who in some respect stand in a tie and relation to God by that Covenant with *Abraham, &c.* which is not with any other Nation that can come in then to the Church, as appeareth from *Rom. 11. 26, 27, &c.* for, they are beloved for the Fathers sake, when broken off, and the Fathers sake relateth to the Covenant made with them. So *His wife* here, holdeth forth the in-coming of the Jewish Nation, to accept of their long despised Bridegroom, and their returning to their first husband, and *David* their King, which is said of them to be fulfilled in the latter dayes, *Hos. 2.*

The reasons why we expound this of the *Jews*, are, 1. Because they speak of this accession to the Church as of some excellent new thing, and calleth them singularly the *Lambs wife*; and therefore they must be distinct from the *Gentiles* Church, who do thus stile them and make them welcome: for, these titles are given especially to these who are now lately joynd

and made ready for their Husband and Marriage. 2. Because there can be no such grounds of praise, if the *Jews* were not here included. For, 1. it is His reigning in the most eminent way in His Church; 2. it is the Churches eminent step of glory unto, and readines for her marriage; and can that be without the *Jews*? 3. Neither can there be such joy, as if now nothing were wanting, if the *Jews* in-coming, which is fore- prophesied of, as life from the dead (*Rom. 11.*) were yet defective. Beside, that these titles and expressions have a peculiar suitableness and sibness with the *Jews*, as is said before *Her being made ready*, is, her being made suitable and fit for such a work and Bridgroom, to wit, with the wedding Garment, *Matth. 22.* which is faith and holiness; and she is content to take Him, and longeth for a Church-state to own Him. She is said to *make herself ready*, not as if in her own strength she fitted her self; for, that is contrary to what followeth, *To her it was given* whatever she had, she got it freely, it was not her own. But it implyeth, 1. that she must be made ready for Him: common garments are not for that wedding, *Matth. 22.* 2. That she is active in it, in purifying her self as He is pure, from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, *1 Joh. 3. 2 Corinth. 7. 1.* 3. That what maketh her ready, is something performed by her, to wit, her believing, which yet is done in His strength; and all the marriage dependeth on that. Now, she despiseth no longer, but layeth by her enmity, and submittech. It sheweth the manner how she came to be made ready, or the putting away antecedently of what marred her; but it sheweth not the strength, by which she is made ready: the next verse adjoyned guardeth against that.

## LECTURE II.

Verf. 8. *And to her was granted, that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.*

9. *And he saith unto me, Write, blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.*

10. *And I fell at his feet to worship him: and he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus, worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophesie.*

**T**His eighth verse doth more fully clear, and the ninth more fully confirm what went immediately before concerning the Lambs marriage, and the making ready of His Wife. There are two things cleared in the 8. ver. 1. What it is to be ready. It is to be clothed in fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of Saints. 2. How she is made ready, thus, to her it was granted, *i. e.* freely given that she should be clothed. The two things, which are confirmed, are, 1. That it is certain, there is such a thing coming as the marriage of the Lamb spoken of. 2. That it shall be the great happiness of any that shall be called unto it: Both which are confirmed, 1. by a special command to write them, as things that should certainly come to pass. 2. In that they were not the sayings of Men nor Angels, but the true sayings of God, who is Truth it self, *ver. 9.* Both these, to wit, the explication and confirmation, may be considered more generally, as they yeeld general doctrines, or, more specially and prophetically, as they relate to the present scope.

The 8. ver. hath three things in it, 1. Who is this made ready. 2. What this readiness is. 3. How she cometh by it.

The party made ready is *her*, that is, the wife formerly mentioned, *ver. 7.* to wit, the *Jews*: for, the *Gentile* Church is before this adorned, *Chap. 12. 1. &c.* The word is *γυνή*, that signifieth, 1. one espoused only, as *Mary* was to *Joseph*, before they came together, *Matth. 1.* this in the *Latine* is called *sponsa*. Or, 2. it is taken for one brought to her Husband, and joynd to him, this the *Latines* call *uxor*. It is here taken especially in the first sense, so that the *Jews*, that stood before their actual calling in a special Covenant-relation with Christ, (which is not yet fully obliterated and dissolved, as concerning the Covenant made with the Fathers, *Rom. 11. 26.*) are now made ready. 2. This readiness is now set out in two expressions, 1. figuratively, she is clothed in fine linen, clean and white. 2. More plainly, it is the righteousness or justification of the Saints. Both may be two wayes understood. 1. Of Christs imputed righteousness, whom we are said to put on, *Rom. 12. ult. and Gal. 3.* when by faith we are united to Him and made partakers of His righteousness for the hiding of our nakedness, as in His

His counsel to *Laodicea*, Chap. 3. 2. It may be understood of inherent righteousness, which also in some respect we are said to put on, *Col. 3. 12*. In the first sense, it is called *clean* and *white* simply, for so Christs righteousness is without spot. In the second sense, it is so comparatively; or, it is cleanness and whiteness not absolute, but in respect of what they were, and in respect of the holiness of other times; This shall now be more. 2. The righteousness or justification of the Saints is also two ways understood, 1. for a righteousness before men, evidencing their justification before God; so it is said, (*Jam. 2.*) that *Abraham* was justified by his works. 2. For that which indeed justifieth and is the cause of our justification before God; and so (*Rom. 4.*) *Abraham* was not justified by works, not onely excluding all the works of the ceremonial Law (for it was then not given) but even of the moral Law. But he was justified by faith in Jesus Christ, which was imputed to him for righteousness; the former, is the same with inherent righteousness, the latter is called imputed. Now, though we take in both here, as they are alway conjoynd and go together (and holiness serveth in a special way to make ready and meet for enjoying Christ in Glory, when these garments shall be fully white) yet we understand here Christs imputed righteousness, or, the righteousness of faith especially, as that which maketh the Lambs wife ready, and that for these reasons, 1. This cloathing is that which is the righteousness of all Saints, and that before God; but that of faith, was *Abrahams* before the Law, *Rom. 4.* *Dauids* under the Law, *Psal. 32.* with *Rom. 4.* and *Pauls* under the Gospel, *Philip. 3. 9.* therefore so here. 2. Christs righteousness is onely spotless and clean, ours is unclean, the best being filthy. 3. This readiness is that upon which the marriage with Christ standeth, and serveth to clothe with him in that Covenant; but that is in the offer, he that believeth shall be saved: and it is the want of that, that casteth and marreth the making of the marriage; for, holiness inherent preceedeth not our union with Christ, which is our marriage, but followeth our consent (when the bargain is closed) as duties of a person married. 4. It agreeth best with the scope in reference to the in-coming of the *Jews*, they are made ready and brought in by the contrary of that for which they were cast off; but that (*Rom. 11.*) was unbelief, stumbling at the stumbling stone, in going about to establish their own righteousness, and not submitting to His, *Rom. 9.* and *10. verse 3.* Therefore now, that which maketh them ready, must be faith and submission to Christs righteousness. 5. This agreeth best with, and is clear from the expressions setting forth the manner how she is made ready, and that in two expressions, *she is clothed with it*: that speaketh to the resemblance of putting on something from without, in which this readiness and decorating consisteth, and not of what is within, as *Rev. 3.* which pointeth at imputing of righteousness. 2. That *it was granted to her*, to shew it was not of her self, it was given and freely given and gifted to her, which faith it is not inherent holiness; for, that some way inferreth debt, and is opposed to grace, *Rom. 4. 9.* and *11. Eph. 2.* but it is of grace, which is the same with faith, that it might be free, *Rom. 4. 16. Eph. 2.* and that to all the seed: by which it appeareth how we are to reconcile *vers. 7.* with this.

Thus if we look to the scope, as it is propheticall, this Verse faith, 1. that these *Jews*, on whom blindness and hardness hath layen long, shall in the end in due time be brought in to believe on Jesus Christ, and to submit to that righteousness which is common to all Saints, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, and to take that one way of salvation with the *Gentiles*, which they have so long rejected; God shall freely re-ingraft them again in His Church by that same faith which they despised. 2. That they at their in-coming into the Church of God at that time, shall be

more eminently shining in holiness than formerly; when the *Gentiles* shall provoke the *Jews*; and there shall be a holy emulation amongst them, more fully to adorn the profession of the Gospel, then shall the number of believers be increased, and their qualifications of holiness at a higher pitch, This flourishing estate is promised whatever be of external peace.

The confirmation followeth, *verse 9.* where consider, 1. who confirmeth. 2. What he confirmeth. 3. How. First, The person confirming, is not God nor Jesus Christ (for it had not been a fault, *verse 10.* to have worshipped him) but is an Angel: it is like, that Angel, who, (*Chap. 17.*) came to shew *John* the judgement of the whore, and whom, it is like, God made use of, to shew *John* the things to come, *Chap. 1. 1.* That which he confirmeth in an extraordinary way by a special commission to write, that the thing may be the more observed, is set down in these words, *Blessed are they who are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.* The Lamb, is our Lord Jesus, often called so. His marriage here, is that, *verse 7.* especially of the *Jews* in-calling to faith in him. It signifieth, 1. that betwixt Christ and believers there is a mutual tye, consent and obligation of each to other. 2. That it is real. 3. A near tye. 4. Kindly and lovingly. 5. Indissolvable. 6. For believers advantage, to share of what He hath. It sheweth, in a word, a kindly and loving relation between Christ and them beyond what is betwixt Him and others. It is called a *marriage supper*, not mainly from that custome, as if then suppers had been most rise feasting times at Marriages, what ever truth be in it: for *Matth. 22. 3.*) It is called a *dinner* that the guests are invited unto: but this seemeth to be the cause, that *Matth. 22.* looketh to the *Jews* first calling at the preaching of the Gospel which they rejected: and it is called a *dinner*, they being more timely invited to it with the first. This again looketh to their calling, which shall be made effectual when the day draweth near to an end at their restoring; therefore it is called the *marriage supper*, as more immediately preceeding the solemnizing fully of the Bridegrooms Marriage, when the Queen shall be brought to His Palace, and the first-born shall be gathered together.

By *Called* here, are understood, 1. those who are effectually so; for, they are blessed and glorified, *Rom. 8. 30.* Yea, 2. called even outwardly: Now, they of the *Jews* that shall be called to the Supper, are more happy than those who were called at the first to the Dinner; for, God shall make them generally more obedient, and the iron sinew shall be taken out of their neck, and the vail from off their eyes, and they shall generally yeeld to this Call, and flow like doves to their windows to this Gospel; therefore are they blessed and happy. Thus these who are called by this happiness, are not onely opposed to these who are not called at all, or onely to such who are called and not chosen, *Matth. 20.* But this second Call of the *Jews* is opposed, thus, to the first, *Matth. 22.* which is, in a word, that the *Jews* after their re-ingrafting shall be generally more blessed, by being made to yeeld to the call of the Gospel, than those who did live under the first offer thereof. So, the things prophetically confirmed are two, 1. That there is a second calling of the *Jews*, or feast of Christs Marriage to come, beside what was at first at the Dinner, a new offer to be made to the *Jews* before the end of the world, and a new and most beautiful lustre to be put upon the Church. 2. That they shall be blessed and happy beyond the former *Jews* that shall be called to this, as is said.

This truth is confirmed two ways, 1. by a special command to write; *write*, saith he, as *Chap. 14. 13.* importing a singular excellency in the thing. 2. A great certainty in it, that it may be recorded *ad futuram rei memoriam*, as *Paul* signifieth in expressing that of the *Jews* calling, *Rom. 11.* 3. A difficulty in



in believing, or receiving the truth so pressed. And a second way he confirmeth this, *These are the true sayings of God*; it is from the Author of them and His nature and the nature of all His sayings; they are (saith he) not Mens nor Angels words, (for, there might be a lie, in both these) but they are Gods, all whose words are Truth, He Himself being Truth, He Himself being God who cannot lie: and yet as in these sayings concerning the happiness of these called, there is (as it were) a singular eminency of His faithfulness; so in special these are His true sayings, and will take effect.

The 10. *ver.* is notable, by expressing the infirmity of an eminent Saint, and the Angels rejecting of that worship intended to him by John, with several reasons, as if purposely he would rectifie men in that point of will-worship, in giving that religious adoration to creatures though most excellent, which alone is due to God.

John's infirmity is set down in these words, *And I fell at his feet to worship him.* Worship implyeth three things, 1. An act in the judgement, taking up an excellency in the object worshipped. 2. An act of the will, yeelding it conformly to that apprehended excellency. 3. An external act of the body; This may be common to all sorts of worship. Further we may consider a twofold adoration, or worship, mentioned in Scripture, that is allowable; one is Religious, and is a special duty due to God, and commanded in the first Table of the Law; the other is Civil, which is due to creatures, and commanded in the second Table. Again, this second sort is twofold: the first, is that which proceedeth from a reverencing of men for their stations or relations, whatever their qualifications be, as Magistrates, Ministers, Parents, great Men, &c. The second, is a reverential worshipping of men for their qualifications of wisdom and holiness, so we respect good men though they be not great, as *Act. 2. 47.* Such living Saints get, and in a greater measure Angels may have when they appear; such was that which Abraham and Lot gave to the Angels, *Gen. 18. and 19.* supposing them to be men. All these are lawful.

There is also an idolatrous and sinful worship, and that is, when what is due to the Creator is given to any creature, and that either more grossly to Idols, Images, &c. (called worshipping of devils) or, more subtil, to Saints, as that of Cornelius to Peter, *Act. 10.* and that to Paul and Barnabas, *Act. 14.* and is also of diverse sorts. This here is not of the first two sorts: for, it is not condemnable to worship God, nor to give holy Men and Angels due reverence; But it is this third sort, an unlawful worship, as appeareth by the Angels rejecting it with so much zeal and earnestness, these two wayes expressed, 1. By a vehement prohibition, *See thou do it not*: there is no more in the Original but, *See no*, an abrupt cutted expression, such as is used when men hasten to prevent something they abhor and would fain prevent. 2. It is expressed by the pressing arguments he useth, which are two, 1. This is not my due to be so worshipped, *I am (saith the Angel) thy fellow-servant*, not thy Lord, and the fellow-servant of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus, and are employed in His Ministry; we have but one Ministry, 1. The Angels to the Prophets, then the Prophets to the Church, Therefore are Ministers called Angels, and Angels Ministers. The second argument is taken from Gods prerogative, to whom only such worship is due, *worship God*, saith he, *I am not God*, and that is alone due to Him: therefore give it not to me but to Him, allowing by the one argument no such worship to creatures, and by the other appropriating it all to God.

He confirmeth, in the close, his arguments, (especially the first) thus, *For the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy*: which may be thus understood, the Spirit of Prophecy and revealing of these things is not mine, but it is Jesus Christ; hence it may be called *the testimony of Jesus*, as be-

longing peculiarly to Him: therefore worship is not due to me, who am but a servant with thee; Or, to the same purpose, reading the words as they lye, *I am thy fellow-servant*, for the testimony of Jesus, or the ministry of the Gospel, (called so for its bearing witness to Christ, in which respect, Ministers are often called Witnesses. See *Chap. 22. 8.*) is the Spirit of prophesie, that is, is also His gift and way of revealing secrets and edifying of others, as this more immediat message which I bear is, they are of the same nature and kind of service, and therefore from these who are employed in one of them, religious worship is not due to the other, they being fellow-servants.

For more clear opening the doctrine contained in the words, it may be asked, 1. If John sinned? 2. What sort of sin? 3. How he, being such an eminent servant of Christ, and in the midst of such revelations, fell into it.

First, That he sinned, we suppose is clear, 1. in that he never fell to worship an Angel before, though he had seen and spoken with sundry, he is not reprov'd for that, but for this. 2. By the nature of the reproof, *See thou do it not*, especially considering it again renewed, *Chap. 22.* as of an habitual sin. 3. By the reasons whereby John is rejected, as having aimed to give that to a creature, which was due to God the Creatour, and not to it: which reasons do reject that worship, not for complement, but on such grounds as conclude that none such is due to any Angel.

For the second, we may easily discern the kind of sin, but more hardly in what respect he fell into it; for kind, it is (no question) idolatry, in giving that to a creature which is due to God. Now, there is a twofold idolatry. 1. Against the first Command, that is, when folks erre in the object of their worship, giving it to another than God: this is of three sorts, 1. to what hath no being, as to such idols, which are nothing; 2. to what hath a being, good or bad creatures, Angels, devils, sun, moon, heaven, &c. 3. More subtilly, when one maketh gold his confidence, as *Job* speaketh, *Chap. 31.* or his belly or some lust his god: in which respect, covetousness is called idolatry, *Col. 3. 5.* Secondly, Idolatry against the second Command, is not a miscarrying in the object, but in the manner of worshipping Him, who alone is the true object of religious worship, as when men worship God by other meanes or midles than He hath prescribed. Such was Aarons making the calf to *Jehovah*, *Jeroboams* putting up the calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*: both these sorts are rife amongst the Papists. Now, for this of *Johns*, it is especially and directly of the first kind.

If it be asked, why John fell now in this sin, and not before? It can hardly be said that he fell in this fault only upon mistake of the person, as if he had supposed him to be Christ that spoke to him. For, 1. it is like John knew it was that Angel, spoken of, *Chap. 17. 1.* who did still speak to him; for, so we conceive the same Angel to continue his undertaking, to shew John the whore's judgement, which yet to the end of the Chapter is not finished in her supporter. 2. If that had been the mistake, he needed not then have fallen into it again, *Chap. 22. 8.* after he was taught in this point. 3. Had that been his mistake, the Angel needed say no more, but tell him he was not Christ; but the Angel's answers are to rectifie him in the grounds of his practice, as proceeding from a mistake in what was due to God and to Angels; and his answer being to remedy his falling, we may the more warrantably read, out of the contrary directions which the Angel giveth him, what was his falling: This therefore is not the ground. We conceive it then to flow from these three together surprizing the holy man, 1. The glorious appearance of the Angel. 2. The good news he told him. 3. John's weaknesse and the nature of our corruption in departing from God, which is in some measure in the strongest. Now, considering these three to meet together, it is no wonder that

that *John* was surprised, as it were, even to the forgetting of himself, and falling down now to worship once and again, which he had not formerly done; thus the good news of the Church on earth here, and of the Church in heaven, (*Chap. 22. 8.*) again affecteth him so. *Alcasar* acknowledgeth the same reason: From which we may conclude; 1. The sinfulness of worshipping Angels, Saints, or any other thing by religious worship. This Argument maketh it out, That which is condemned in *John*, is not to be practised by any; But this is condemned in *John*. *Ergo*, &c. Papists, to elchew this argument and defend their idolatry, run in two extreame answers, whereof the one overturneth the other. 1. They say, he sinned in mistaking the person only, and so giving *Latria* to Angels, whereas *Dulia* is only due to them: But this is refuted; 1. in that before it is shown this was not the ground of *John's* practice. 2. The Angel's arguments are not only against this sort of worship, but all worship, and admitteth of no middle-worship, as we will hear, but will have all directed to God.

But seeing it cannot be denied, but *John* understood that this was an Angel, and not Christ, and that therefore he intended not *latreia* to the messenger (as *Viegas*, *Cornelius à Lapide*, and *Alcasar* upon this place, do not only acknowledge, but confirm:) It is therefore secondly, their way to alleage, that *John* sinned not, but that he did his duty: and because that digesteth hardly, considering the Angel's repeated reproof, they are therefore put to it to invent reasons, why the Angel doth reject this duty, and say, 1. it is but for complement, to shew his humility; 2. to testifie their respect to Christ, who is now man; therefore they shun honour now of men (whereas they say now, it is on a mistake, as if he who received this honour at any time under the Law, had been a created Angel) Or, say some, for respect to *John's* person, or office, or merits, wherein he was above Angels, especially by his virginity, and therefore it is no wonder Angels refused it from him.

Unto all which, we reply, 1. That it is no wonder that men go wilde, when they give way to their own inventions, and rest not satisfied in the reasons given by the Angel.

2. It must be a strong addictedness to idolatry, that when we have it out of an Angels mouth twice from heaven, yet will we not acquiesce in it, but rather say the Angel was wrong, than amend that fault.

3. We have shown, that this is sinful in *John*, when it is thus thrust away by the Angel once and again, and that upon such arguments as inferred that God was wronged by it: for, what is that argument, *worship God*? If it be of any force, as to the Angel's exhortation, *Worship not any but God*, it must imply, that his worshipping of the Angel was not a worshipping of God, but a derogation to it, and that worshipping of God could not have been consistent with worshipping of him, otherwise he might have worshipped God and the Angel also, which breaketh the force of the Angel's consequence, which opposeth them as inconsistent together.

It is wonderful therefore, that *Beſarmine* should fall in that impudency (*De sanct. beatitud. lib. 1. cap. 14.*) as to press an argument for worshipping of Angels from this place, thus, Either (saith he) *John* took it to be Christ, whom he worshipped, and so he sinned by giving the Angel divine honour; or, he knew him to be an Angel, and yet worshipped him, which (saith he) is a copy to us; for, if *John* knowingly worshipped an Angel, so should we, and whether doth *John* or the *Calvinists* (so he speaketh) know best what is due to Angels? and this he confirmeth, If it had not been duty, then (saith he) *John* would not have done it after the first admonition; for, he was neither forgetful nor indocile.

Ans. If worshipping of Angels arise from this place, certainly it may be gathered any where; and seeing the weight of

it lyeth here, that if it had been sinful, *John* would not have done it, and this supposeth *John* to have had no corruption, and saith nothing to the arguments formerly alleaged. It may more easily be retorted, thus, Either in this practice *John* sinned, or the Angel; But it cannot be said that the Angel sinned in reproofing of him for doing this: Therefore *John* sinned in doing it.

It cannot be said, that neither sinned: For, 1. there is an opposition, the one disalloweth what the other practiseth; and if any thing be gathered from *John's* relapsing in that deed, *Chap. 22. 8.* the same may be urged still, either he sinned in renewing of this practice, or the Angel in renewing his reproof: for, he doth again follow his reproof, and that more hotly than formerly. 2. They cannot both be right here: for, *John* did not worship this Angel formerly; and if the former was no sin, this must be: neither is it to be thought that the Angel would have confirmed *John* by this reproof in his former error. 3. The Angel not only refuseth *John's* worship, but refuseth it with reasons, which will admit no such evasion: For, either the Angel really abhorred this fact as he expressed, or he did dissemble; But this last cannot be said. *Ergo*, &c. *Alcasar* confesseth, that these reasons which they give, will not hold, and that it is beside the Text to alleage any other than the Angel mentioneth; he doth therefore excogitate (forsooth) a judicious exposition, and saith, the Angel here is *Peter*, and that, *Chap. 22.* is *Paul*, and that they refuse worship from *John* their Colleague, as their great Church-men do from one another, who use to say to each other in their low courtesies, *keep that* (meaning their humbling of themselves) *to the Sacrament of the altar*. He maketh that objection to himself why *Peter*, being the Prince of the Apostles, refused that honour which *John* was offering. He answereth, that it is truth, that in the first ages of the Church the Popes used not to be so reverently worshipped, their pomp was not come to an height, Therefore *Peter* refused it, as being loath at that time that it should be known how great they were. In all which fooleries we may see what it is to thwart with cleat Scripture.

2. We may conclude the falshood of that distinction of *Dulia* from *Latria*, as a mid-worship between Divine and Civil. If the Angel would admit no worship to him, Then there is no such thing; But he rejecteth all without distinction. This is clear, 1. by the opposition he maketh, *worship God*, and so leaveth no religious worship to any but to God. 2. By this, *John* gave not *latreia* to him, but *dulia*; for, he knew him to be an Angel; but the Angel casteth that which *John* gave him: therefore he admitteth no mid-worship.

3. This distinction will enervate both the Angels reasons why he casteth that worship. The first, *I am thy companion*, and (*Chap. 22. 9.*) *companion of all that keep the sayings of this Book*, &c. therefore do it not. His argument is, No fellow-servant that is not Master, is to be worshipped by an other; But I and all Angels are fellow-servants: *Ergo*. The reason pleadeth that *de jure* nothing is due to him. Now, if there were any such distinction, it might be replied, as Papists do, *non sequitur*; why? because there is a mid sort of worship allowable to fellow servants, and therefore the Angel did wrong in rejecting of it. His second reason is, *worship God*, which saith, this worship and all worship is due to God, Therefore it is not due nor to be given to men. The adding of this distinction would enervate the argument, and say, it is not this worship or all worship that is to be given to God only; or, when he saith, ye cannot worship God and me, (for he opposeth these as inconsistent) they would answer yes, with diverse sorts of worship we can, whereas the Angels scope is to overturn all such worship to himself and to ascribe it all to God; and therefore saith not, give not me this or that sort



of worship, but none; yea, so he appointeth even that which *John* gave him to be given unto God. And if *Satan* were allowed, then worshipping of Angels would be a worshipping of God the Master; But the Angel opposeth here worshipping of God, to the worshipping of him: Therefore worshipping of Angels, is acknowledged by Angels to be no worshipping of God: otherwise *John* might have replied, that he was worshipping God, the sender in him that was sent.

4. If there were any worship due to Angels of a religious kind, then the Angel should not simply have prohibited, but should have directed *John* right, lest from one extreame he had fallen to another; But that he doth not: and if we consider that God comprehendeth all worship either in the first or second table of the Law, and this can be none of them, we need not be anxious about it, but say, certainly Angels know better what is their due than Papists and *Billarmine* do: Therefore we conclude, that giving of Angels that worship, is sinful and idolatrous.

It will confirm this, if we consider what use the Fathers make of this place, who draw a strong Argument for Christs Divinity from this, that He is worshipped, whereas no Angel is capable of worship, which they confirm from this place,

*vide Ath. serm. 3. contra Arian. pag. (mibi) 191.* Certainly this answer would overturn that argument so much pressed by them, if there were any religious worship which did not prove him to be God that is worshipped. The use also which *Augustine* maketh of it against the heathens on *Psal. 96. (nobis 97.)* is to the same purpose, expounding these words, *Confounded be they that serve graven images, &c.* he entereth in debate with the heathens, who (saith he) denied that they worshipped an Image (knowing it to be without life) but said, *Adoro quod video, sed servo ei quem non video*, Not unlike this former distinction. If it were asked, who that were, they answer, *numerus quoddam*. If it were replied again, that which they took to be *numen*, was a devil. They answered, (Colum. 1088.) *non colimus mala demonia; Angelos, quos dicitis, ipsos & nos colimus, virtutes Dei magni & ministeria Dei magni.* *Augustine* urgeth, *utinam ipsos colere velletis, facile ab ipsis disceritis non illos colere, audite Angelum doctorum.* And then citeth this place, *surge, quid facis? illum adora, &c.* and concludeth, *quid ergo, fratres mei, nemo dicat, timo ne irascatur mihi Angelus si non illum colo, tunc tibi irascitur quando ipsum colere volueris, bonus est enim & Deum amat, &c.*

## LECTURE III.

Verf. 11. *And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and he that sat upon him was called faithful and true, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.*

12. *His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns, and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself.*

13. *And he was clothed with a vesture dipt in blood, and his name is called, The word of God.*

14. *And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*

15. *And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.*

16. *And he hath on his vesture, and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.*

17. *And I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that flie in the midst of heaven, Come and gather your selves together unto the supper of the great God:*

18. *That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.*

19. *And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.*

20. *And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he hath deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.*

21. *And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.*

**T**He last part of the Chapter followeth from *vers. 11.* to the end; wherein the last part of the sixth vial of the battel of *Armageddon* (mentioned *Chap. 16.*) is more fully set down. 1. In the preparations for it. 2. In the event of it. The first is to *vers. 14.* The other, to the end.

The preparation of the beast was more fully set down, *Chap. 16.* Therefore it is but touched here, and the Lambs order and Army, who are the other party, are more insisted on.

*I saw heaven opened.* This is preparatory to the vision, that he might the more clearly discern it: but that is not all, hereby it would appear is now set out a more flourishing estate of the Gospel after the Lambs marriage; for, by a *white horse* this was signified, *Chap. 6.* and by the *opening of Heaven* and the *Ark*, *Chap. 11.* it was signified also, This would then hold forth a flourishing Church, able to send out Armies at least of spiritual fighters for Christ, against His enemies.

The preparations upon the Lambs side, are more particularly set down, 1. By the description of the Captain. 2. Of an Angel, as an Herald denouncing the War, or rather foretelling the victory, *vers. 17.* he insisteth most on the Captain; for, He is of most concernment in the War, and cannot easily be described. The properties given Him are of two sorts. 1. Such, whereby he is someway tied in his proceedings to His Word. 2. Such, wherein He is absolute, and He hath a name answering both as a description. There are four names given to Him that divide this description; Or, take it as it lieth, and, 1. we have set down His own properties, to *vers. 14.* Then, 2. His Army, *vers. 14.* and, 3. His Weapons or Armour, *vers. 15.* He now rideth on His *white horse* as Captain, being spotlesse in His way and manner of proceeding; for which cause, His first stile (*vers. 11.*) is *faithful* and *true* in keeping promise and Covenant to His People. And then, secondly, it is added, that in *righteousness* he doth judge and make war: which implieth, that there is a right end in His undertaking, a right cause, and a right manner of proceeding in it. Two, properties more are set down, *vers. 12.* *His eyes were like a flame of fire*, importing searching omniscency and terrible Majesty, as *Chap. 1.* *He hath on his head many crowns*, not materially so, but to shew His absolute sovereignty, that He is an high and great and glorious King, so that one crown or few crowns will not serve to describe His glory. This is a great King above all kings, as His name is, *vers. 16.* This also importeth many triumphs and victories over His enemies.

Answerable to this greatness, He hath an inexpressible name that none can take Him up in the infiniteness and greatness of His Essence and glory but Himself, to creatures it is a mystery and a secret, as *Judg. 13. 18.* for, no name can adequately set out His perfections.

He proceedeth in the description of Him, *vers. 13.* as in a most conquering-like posture, *He was clothed with a vesture dipt in blood*: it is like with the blood of the former events of former vials, or of this on Him: He followeth the chase so hot, when He once beginneth and appeareth so terrible and bloody, and yet conquering like *one mighty to save*, *vers. 12.* His name is here set down more plainly in *ment*, and *thual* for *John* to give Him, and that is, *The word of God*. *Th. 1.* So Christ is called the Word. First, in respect of His person, seeing He doth express the character of the Fathers Person as clearly as the Word doth represent a mans secret conception within, *Heb. 1. 3.* Secondly, in respect of His Offices, because by Him God doth as by a word plainly make known the secrets of the Gospel, before hid in Him.

In the 14. Verse, His Armies are set out, 1. These in *beaven*: not only Angels and Saints glorified; but such of the Church, as (*vers. 8.*) are arrayed with such vesture. The new married Jews and the beautified Gentiles are both stirred

up to this employment, They are named, *Chap. 17. called and faithful* who were with the Lamb, they are the same here. The Church now is more pure in worship, and shining in holiness; and the most pure are most zealous in following of Him: for, this honour have all His Saints, as *Psal. 149.* 2. They are called *Armies*, for their multitude, strength and discipline. 3. They *ride*, and that on *white horses*: He hath all His Souldiers mounted as well (as it were) as Himself, they share with Him as certainly of the victory, as He doth overcome: It is good being on the Lambs side, and at His back. But there no word of a weapon amongst them all: for, they need none, because He goeth foremost and fighteth, and they but follow as a company in triumph. It is to let see also, it is not the Souldiers, but the Captain, and His weapons that get the victory; for, *righteousness* or *fine linen* is their defensive armour, and for offensive, they have none mentioned here, although from *Chap. 17.* and the scope, we may gather that they are also to be made active in this war, yet the victory dependeth not thereupon: *holiness* and *faith* is the best armour folks can put on.

His own weapons are set down, *vers. 15.* In three, 1. *A sword going out of his mouth*, which is the word whereby He subdueth Nations to Himself. 2. *A rod of iron*, *Psal. 2.* signifying both Authority, (*Psal. 110. 2.*) and power to crush gainayers, and to put His Laws in execution against wicked opposers that yield not to the Word, them He striketh with the rod of iron: for, rule He must. 3. *There is a wine-press of Gods wrath*, as *Chap. 14.* and *Isa. 63.* and that He treadeth, that is, He easily (and now at this time) abundantly executeth judgment Himself, where the former prevaleth not. And seeing He treadeth alone, *Isa. 63.* few arms will serve these that are with Him.

Suitable to this Sovereignty and Power He hath a name, (*vers. 16.*) on his *vesture*, that it may be visible (as it were, in His Colours legible) and on his *thigh*, that is, graven now, most observably upon all His ways and motions, as *Chap. 1.* It shall now be known He is *Lord of lords*, and *King of kings*, that is, most Sovereign, and will now be seen and acknowledged to be so, for He taketh it on Him.

Lastly, *vers. 17. 18.* This battel is set out by one *standing in the sun*, that he may be conspicuous, *crying to all fowls, to come, and to eat*, all sorts of *great and small*: which doth set out, 1. the certainty of this defeat. 2. the greatness of it: the slain shall be so many, that fowls shall eat them; it is borrowed from *Ezek. 39. 17.* Also it may set out a clear and confident incitation of Gods Ministers to stir up others to go about the execution of this judgement with confidence of victory, as if they were invited to prey upon dead men; and possibly also by this, many that are not mounted like the Lamb, nor clothed in white, and are not following Him, nor walking on His account, shall yet upon hope of gain to feed (like ravenous fowls upon others rulse,) engage into this fight, and be made use of (though following their corrupt ends) for a time to execute Gods justice against this beast, who preferred his own interest to Christs.

This is the Lambs preparation; now followeth a word of the contrary party. There is the *beast* and the *Kings of the earth* and their *armies*, to wit, some Kings yet sticking to the beast, that did lament the whores destruction, and with them others without the Church, of late engaged to side with the Pope, who is now made to flee from Rome. The *beast* here is only mentioned (though, *Chap. 16. 13.* and in the following *verse*, the *false prophets* be added) to shew they are but one, though diversly represented. All these are gathered against Christ (so it is constructed) and His people. How this gathering proceeded, and whence it came, is not spoken to here, because it is insisted on, *Chap. 16. 13. &c.* as also the place



whereto they are brought; only now both Armies and their Captains are marked to be in the fields.

The event followeth, *ver.* 20. and 21. in three steps, first, in respect of the opposit Chistain, 1. he is taken prisoner, 2. he is condemned and cast alive in the lake from whence he came. The party overcome hath two names, yet is one; The beast here is that first, *Chap.* 13. the false prophet is that second Ecclesiastick beast, or second consideration of the former: for, these same things are attributed to this false prophet, which were the properties of that beast, *Chap.* 13. 11. therefore they are one, as was shewn there; and their joynt death sheweth in all things an identity. They are only named as distinct, 1. to shew that that grandour of *Rome*, which hath long stood, and after that City is burned, doth yet pretend some prehemingence by the surviving of its last head the false prophet, (who still, though banished, keepeth up the name of *Romish Pope*,) shall now both fall together, *Romes* Empire in that series and the *Pope* they shall go together into destruction, and there shall be no such Empire of *Rome* under any form after that, as hath formerly been, but the body and head (in a word) shall perish together. 2. To shew that both that evil grandour signified by the first beast, and that religious deceit and hypocrisie, whereby it was maintained, shall now be at a further end than when the whore was destroyed; no *Popes* nor avowed spreading of *Poperie* are to be after this in any such measure. Thus they are captivated who kepted still liberty in all former defeats, and are ensnared, as it were, unawares when they looked for no such thing, but on the opinion of the *Popes* perpetuity were confident: the word, in the Original, implyeth some surprisal: they are cast alive in the lake; this is their judgement, to set out the abhorrency which the Lord hath at them and sheweth at their end, as in the case of *Korah*, *Dathan*, &c. to shew there is a judgement after this to them; for, he pursueth them still till it end them. 3. To shew, that there is now no regress to them after this defeat; for, it is irrecoverable to the beast by the sixth vial, as it was to the whore by the fifth, before, *Chap.* 18. he came from the pit, *Chap.* 13. and 17. and he returneth to it here.

2. This victory is set out in respect of these that escaped this sort of judgement, *ver.* 21. all that adhere to the beast, it is like, perish not now; some by Christs Word are either win, and so their enmity is slain and they made to submit; or, by it they are condemned: the former, (as to many) is not unlike Christs conquest, *Psal.* 45.

The event is set out by the satisfaction that these who love prey shall have; the slaughter and spoil is answerable to what was denounced, *ver.* 17. and 18. These that follow duty, even on corrupt ends, may sometimes get a fill and some successe; but these that did ride on white horses, had a more noble design: this one sword of Christ doth all the business, and they have enough to be witnesses.

So the series of Antichrists destruction looketh thus in the three last vials; the fifth overturneth *Rome*, yet he himself hath some being and maketh some new stickling or shifting for help in his last essay: after that he is taken by the sixth, and there is then neither seat nor beast to sit in it; yet possibly there may be some remnant of adherents to that *Babylonish* superstitious way, regrating the overthrow of the beast by the sixth, as they did of his seat by the fifth, *Chap.* 18. which in this sense may be judicially slain by the sword of Christs mouth, although the execution of it be suspended: these are fully overturned by the seventh vial, when great *Babylon* cometh in remembrance before God, possibly in the dayes of *Gog* and *Magog*, such old principles concerning *Rome* are revived, but they are soon banished.

There is a great objection against this, because the destruction of Antichrist seemeth to be reserved for Christs second coming, 2 *Thes.* 2. 8. and here he is cast in hell, which some think cannot be before the end. Before we answer, we take it for certain, that this judgment of the beast is not at the last day: For, 1. it is under the sixth vial, and it is the seventh that bringeth the end. 2. It is a judgement wherein Armies of Saints are employed and his word is made use of in this ruine, which cannot be said of the last judgement. 3. In this judgement of his casting in the lake, there is a difference put between him and his followers who are otherwise judged, *ver.* ult. and their casting in suspended; there is no such difference in the last judgement. 4. There are some events yet behind this, the devil is not fully overturned till the seventh vial cast him in the lake, which is by the judgement of the great day, and yet the beast is in the lake before him: therefore this judgement is before the last, by which the devil is casten, where the beast and false prophet are before him, as is clear from *Chap.* 20. *ver.* 10.

Now for answer, 1. It is not absurd to say, the final end of Antichrists kingdom shall not be before the end, his kingdom being complexly considered; yet it hindereth not, but both himself and his seat may be overturned before. 2. That place, 2 *Thes.* 2. may look to the destruction of Antichrist, not at Christs last coming, but at His coming to that judgement of the whore, as it is called the great day of God, *Chap.* 6. when He came to be avenged on heathen Emperours: and the destruction there, (2 *Thes.* 2.) is, 1. peice and peice and not at once. 2. It is by the breath of his mouth, that looketh to the shining of the Gospel, whereby he is ruined, as here by the sword proceeding from Christs mouth. And so, 3. the brightness of His coming will be His coming in the Gospel, and taking to Him that great power which Antichrist hath long usurped; and that agreeth well both with the scope there and here. And, 3. if any should urge further, that in that place (2 *Thes.* 2.) two distinct steps are set down, 1. To consume him by the Spirit of His mouth; but the second, his destruction, is reserved to Christs second coming. *Answer.* It will prove no more but this, 1. That Antichrists fall shall begin long before it end. 2. That it shall be fully compleated at the great Day. 3. That beside whatever come upon him now, there shall also be a reckoning with him then. We deny none of these, seeing the Word saith not it is only so; for, our opinion is not excluded, which saith more, to wit, he shall be judged at his particular judgement and at the general judgement also: and although it be ordinary in the Scripture to design the last day for the time of persecuters destruction and the Saints outgate, because both are at that day perfected; yet can it not be argued, Therefore there are no foregoing strokes or deliveries; so neither can it be in the present case, beside, it being in the close of the sixth vial, and after the *Jews* conversion, which will be not long before the end, it may there be so expressed.

For that, he is cast alive in the lake, it is certainly not properly to be understood, as if he should never die, but is an allusion to that of *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, to shew the greatness, dreadfull and irrecoverableness of that doom that shall come on. Considering this special and eminently stated enemy to Christ and Jesus Christ in His Kingdom, and Gods visible taking course in this world with other more open enemies, it is like, that the jealous God who is avenged, as is clear, on his seat before men, will even in this world, though he spare him long, singularly shew His judgement on him, beside what He will do in the last Day, which also in part contributeth to His Glory and His peoples comfort, as any other temporal judgement doth, which yet is not so much foretold for these ends as this is.

## LECTURE I.

## CHAP. XX.

Verf. 1. **A**nd I saw an Angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand.



His Chapter hath alway been accounted amongst the darkeſt of this Propheſie, the Lord as it were, minding by this cloſe to ſtay the Inſolency of mens humour, and to teach the neceſſity of ſobriety in the uſe-making of his Word. Hence it is, that many both of old and of late (and that neither of the groſſeſt nor moſt ignorant of Divines) whom God hath made uſe of ſingularly in the opening of his Truths, have yet, notwithstanding, ſtumbled at this: In which *Auguſt. de civitate Dei, lib. 20. cap. 5. and 6.* profeſſeth himſelf once to have been ſomewhat miſcarried; ſo that it will become us, with trembling to undertake it, and alſo ye would with ſobriety aim at the ſearch of the truth, but not expect the ſatisfying of curioſity in it. It is Gods goodneſs that he hath given us the neceſſary Truths of the myſterie of godlineſs in more plain expreſſions; yet, ſince this is a part of the word which God hath given his Church for edification, and ſeing alſo it wanteth not encouragements to ſtir up his People to pry with ſobriety into it, We cannot therefore ſhun the eſſaying of it, looking to Him (without prejudice) who hath in his providence led us to the opening of this Book, and hitherto hath in ſome meaſure helped us in it. The great ground of miſtake is, (as in other dark Scriptures alſo) becauſe the expreſſions are odd and unuſual, therefore we are apt to conceive ſome ſtrange thing to be contained in them, ſuch as is nowhere elſe laid down in plainer words; and our curious and itching humors are ready to foſter that taking occaſion thereby to exerciſe themſelves; and when we come with this prejudice to dive into them, we are often answered according to the *idea* which we have followed in our own hearts. It is neceſſary therefore, that with humility we proſecute this ſearch, it being to ſuch that the Lord revealeth his ſecrets.

Concerning the diviſion of this Chapter, there need be no queſtion; We may take it as containing, firſt, ſome notable events to fall out in the Church of Chriſt before the end of the world, which are two, 1. An eminent binding of Satan, having contemporary with it an eminent reign of the Saints; 2. An eminent looſing of Satan and hazard of the Church.

The ſecond part ſubjoyneth to that the conſummation of all things by the laſt judgement, in which Satan ſhall be utterly faſtened up in his priſon for ever, and the Saints, being freed from all difficulties, are brought to the enjoying of their everlaſting kingdom; Or, take it thus, as it ſeteth out the upſhot of all former Propheſies in the laſt judgment. There are, 1. ſome things going before the laſt judgement, and that immediately. 2. The deſcription of this judgement. 3. What followeth is in the execution of the ſentences thereof; both are one thing.

Concerning the ſcope alſo, we take it to be thus, 1. generally, to ſet out the laſt *Cataſtrophe* and cloſe of all the Churches troubles, and her enemies ruine and malice, they end happily for her, but miſerably for them. 2. More particularly, it is to ſhew her outgate from her grand enemy the Devil, who is the firſt enemy, and continueth with the laſt. It is eſpecially his binding and his looſing and his final overthrow that is aimed at here, (what concerneth the whore, beaſt and falſe prophet, being in the former inſiſted on) and the Churches condition

in reference to this enemy is occaſionally ſet out. 3. And yet more particularly, it is for the explication of the ſeventh vial, which was (*Chap. 16.*) poured out in the air, the devils univerſal kingdom, but ſummarily touched there; here it is more fully ſet out: for, the Dragons deſtruction is inſiſted on here, which was the object of that vial. Beſide, in the former Chapters it being told what became of the whore, *Chap. 18.* and of the beaſt, *Chap. 19.* there being nothing of this enemies overthrow till now recorded, but of his action in the ſixth vial. It followeth therefore, both in order and ſeries of this explication ſubjoyned to the former; and alſo by neceſſity of the matter, that this is added for ſupplying what was defective concerning the overthrow of this enemy, and explication of the ſeventh vial which is no where explained as the reſt are; If it be not here; and the coinciſency of the matter, the dragons final overthrow, and expreſſions about the laſt judgement, common to this with the ſeventh vial, ſuch as the *heavens paſſing away, &c.* do evidence it eſpecially to belong to the clearing of the ſeventh vial. Yet, 4. we add, that we are to reſtrain it ſo, as if both theſe events were fully contemporary with the ſeventh vial; for then the continuance of this vial would be diſproportionable to all the reſt, as being longer than they all. Beſide, that vial, including eſpecially Satans laſt overthrow, it is not neceſſary to extend it ſo far, but ſo much of it muſt be applied to the ſeventh vial, as was not comprehended under the former ſix, but all now is put together when it cometh to its height, and reckoned in a ſum, even as the Churches low condition (*Chap. 11.*) was reckoned, and put in a ſum together of ſo many dayes under the ſixth trumpet, when it came to its height, although it had begun under the trumpets preceeding. That therefore followeth not, but though that be eſpecially the ſcope, which it is levelled at, yet it is not only, but ſo as on that occaſion for more full clearing this victory over the devil, a more full view of his former practices contemporary with former propheſies, is ſet down; and this beginning is drawn down from a prior period of time, that all being ſet together, this laſt may be the more full and clear and obſervable. And yet, 5. We take it not to ſet out the hiſtory of the devil from his firſt reſtraint by the Goſpel, and ſo to be contemporary with that of Michaels caſting him down from heaven (or from civil power) in *Conſtantine*s time, *Chap. 12.* but to begin the ſtory of the dragon here where it left there: thus the devil that is thrown down from civil power and open perſecution, we heard he had great fury when he was put from open working by avowed idolatry and perſecution to a more ſecret underhand way; we heard alſo what way he took then, 1. By ſpewing out a flood after the woman, which was dried up. 2. By going to make war with the Saints, which he attempted and proſecuted by a new lieutenant the Beaſt, and had ſuch ſucceſs by him, that he was again, upon another account, worſhipped, *Chap. 13.* and that by the whole world, except ſome few, and made war with the Saints, and overcame them. Hitherto we have never heard how he was reſtrained, or what became of him after his reign by the beaſt 1260 dayes. To clear that this is ſubjoyned, even to tell what became of the Dragon, as he had formerly told what became of the beaſt; and ſo this Chapter is not contemporary with *Chap. 12.* but it is to be ſubjoyned to it, as the next reſtraint which followed upon him,



him, who then was loose and in rage. This appeareth, 1. by observing the expressions; for, there he is cast down by the Angel of the Covenant Christ, out of heaven to earth; here the Angel descendeth out of heaven to him, (as it were, pursuing him) which supposeth him to be down before. 2. There he is loose and making war with the woman, who is made to flee; here he is bound up, so that the Saints do reign in the mean time. 3. This here is his last great binding, preceeding his loosing in *Gog and Magog* before the end of the world: Either therefore he must say, Satan hath no binding after that, but is still loose to the end, which is false; or we must say, that his binding in reference to that loosing, is not set down in this prophesie, but that only telleth that he was loose, but not how he was restrained, which standeth not with the scope; Or, we must thirdly say, that it is done by this Chapter, which will further appear afterward: and indeed it were hard to say, that one event should be twice expressed in so different expressions, and yet that such a concerning event, as Satans binding after his liberty and dominion in Antichrist, should be passed over in silence. Beside if it were a repetition of the same victory, *Chap. 12.* or of the Gospels victory over Satans kingdom, or that of *Gog and Magog*, a repetition of the prophesies concerning the Pope or *Turks*, then these last explications, or visions, would be much more obscure than the former of the same events, which is contrary to the way of this Book, as is acknowledged by all, and contrary to the manner of repetitions of the same thing used by *Daniel* and other prophets, the last whereof are always clearer than the former. And that Satan getteth the same names here that he getteth, *Chap. 12.* it is not to shew, that it belongeth to the same time; but rather to shew, that it is the continuation of the story of that same enemy, which, as to the event of that rage of his, was defective there, but is supplied here.

For clearing this, consider that there is a fourfold loosing and raging of the devil mentioned in the Word, and there is a fourfold victory of the Church over him in opposition to these, also spoken of, and the last is still the greatest. His first dominion we may call personal, when he kept all the world in gross darkness, worshipping him directly in temples, and he giving responses and answers in them, possessing men personally and corporally, (as he did in Christs time) leading the world at his will. He is bound in this respect by Christs birth, preaching, miracles, death, ascension, and sending forth the Apostles and the Gospel (like a white horse conquering, *Chap. 6.*) whereby the prince of this world was judged, Satan casten from heaven like lightening; many corporally possessed, were dispossessed and freed from his dominion, and the devil chased from his audible answering in oracles, as formerly he had done. His known answer given at *Delphos* to *Augustus* his Legats, who were sent to him to enquire concerning his successor, about the time of Christs birth is by many cited to this purpose,

*Me puer Hebraus, superum Rex, linquere cuncta  
Hec jubet; & ditis cecus remeare sub umbras:  
Ergo silens aris tu nunc abscedito nostris.*

An Hebrew child, King of the heavens high  
To leave these Temples hath commanded me,  
And to be gone, to darkness, and to wo:  
Thou therefore silent from our altars go.

After this no audible answer was given at these Oracles. Thus Satan is bound from the beginning of the Gospel to the end of the world; for, Christ shall have a Church, even among the Nations and Gentiles; and thus Christ hath overcome him, and so spoiled him, that he shall never prevail against the Catholick Church; *Matth. 16.* This is not the binding here, because this is a binding that is eminently applicable and agreeable to one particular time, so as it cannot agree to any other before

nor after. And it would seem that as it is clear, that Satan is loosed after it, before Christs second coming: so it is clear that Satan hath been (as to this binding) loose before it, after Christs first coming, except we say, that all the time between Christ first coming and his second, shall be taken up in these two, to wit, 1. a thousand years restraint upon Satan, and then a little times liberty, upon the back whereof cometh the judgement: but the length of time intervening and the various and frequent ups and downs of the Church shew, that there are more periods in her case, and the great liberty of the Church (and to the binding of Satan, which is still contemporary with it,) spoken of to be in the latter dayes of the Gospel, at least after the first thousand years, will not admit that: These thousand years therefore must not begin either at Christs birth or death, or yet at the destruction of *Jerusalem*, or sending of the Gospel to the Gentiles; (beside that it presupponeth Martyrs as antecedaneous to it) and therefore it must begin after these periods.

There is a second dominion Satan hath yet, even when the Gospel is preached, and that is by his guiding the publick malignity of the world, whereby he condemned Christians, persecuted and destroyed them, and obstructed the publick and avowed profession of Christ in an united Church-way, (at least in a great part) and kept up still Temples and Idol-worship, and that as countenanced by Authority. Satan is put from this, *Chap. 12.* where we have the story of his casting from the throne, before which time he is seen as loose in heaven, that is in person of the Emperours, as a bloody dragon ready to devour the child, (as formerly, *Chap. 6.*) he rideth as it were, on the red, pale and black horses, till by the sixth seal answerable to, and contemporary with, *Chapter 12.* he is in all these respects defeated, the publick and avowed worshipping of idols overturned, and the publick profession of Christianity countenanced by Authority, in which respect, (*Chap. 12. ver. 10.*) it is called the *Kingdom of our God, and power of his Christ*, which certainly inferreth a good condition to the Saints with it.

His third storm and loosing, after he cometh to the earth, is by more subtil means prosecuted in the first six trumpets by the beast, *Chap. 13.* and in the end of *Chap. 12.* which is contemporary with the first six trumpets. His restraint (as to that loosing) is by the seventh trumpet, wherein his dominion by the beast, such as formerly he had by the heathen Emperour is overturned, and answerable to that liberty of his, (spoken of *Chap. 12.* and *13.*) here is set down, in this third explicatory prophesie, Satans third restraint in opposition to that dominion of his by Antichrist: and this prophesie will be found contemporary with the seventh trumpet and the vials from their beginning which succeed immediately to the witnesses ascending up to heaven, and to the end of the womans flight and abode in the wilderness, and to the forty two moneths of the beasts reign.

The fourth and last liberty and dominion of the devil mentioned is this of his stirring up *Gog and Magog*, and his restraint, in reference to this, is the last judgement. Now, seeing his binding here cannot be the first, as is said, nor the second, *Chap. 12.* this presupposing the beast in being, (as appeareth by these who reign in this time) nor yet the last, it must necessarily follow therefore, that it is the binding, spoken of in the third place, which is contemporary with the beasts overthrow, in whom he was formerly worshipped, and saith would have sustained that worship, but was bound up from it, and could not help himself, as *Chap. 18.*

Taking this then to be the binding of Satan, following upon that rage of his, *Chap. 12. ver. 13.* and *17.* the scope will be to shew what came of the devil after he had brought that design to a great height, *Chap. 13.* So that if it be asked, what became of him after he had raged forty two moneths against the woman, having made her flee to the wilderness, and against

he witnesses, having made them prophesie all that time in sackcloth? It is answered here, I saw, saith *John*, him again taken and bound up from his liberty, as the beast was from his; and I saw that Church, which by and under the beast he had persecuted and made despicable in the world, brought again to an honourable condition (wherein he could not impede them) having again an honourable publick and avowed profession of the Gospel in greater number of professors, purity of doctrine, holiness of life, spirituality of worship, and vigor of discipline, with much lesse outward disturbance than formerly: which restraint of his and kingdom to them continued a long time, till God in his secret justice permitted him to make a new onset before the last judgement by *Gog*, which followeth that assault of the devils by the beast, thereafter the Lord pursueth and overturneth him and his designs everlastingly; after which he shall never have a link of his chain loosed to the disturbance of Christs Church. This is the sum, which will be more clear in the particular explication of the words, and in that which followeth.

That we may the more clearly proceed, the great controversies in the words may be drawn to three heads, I mean in so far as concerneth the first event of Satans binding, till *verse 7*.

The first is, concerning the events prophesied of, that is, 1. What is meant by this binding of Satan. 2. What by this dominion or reign of the Saints, of what nature and extent it is; which is also called *living*, and the *first resurrection*.

The second head is, concerning the persons to whom this kingdom is promised, 1. Whether to dead or living Saints. 2. Whether to Martyrs only, or to others. 3. If only to Saints without any hypocrites. 4. If to these who suffer in themselves personally or in others.

The third head is, concerning the time mentioned of a thousand years. And, 1. If the time of the Saints reign be contemporary with, or successive unto the thousand years of Satans restraint; and so, whether they be one; or two distinct times. 2. If these thousand years be definite or indefinite. 3. Whether it taketh in all the time after Christs death, or otherwise. 4. And mainly, whether these thousand years be applicable, and in the scope of the Prophesie and Intent of the Spirit to be applyed unto any time wholly past, or wholly to come; or, to the time which is presently current.

The first and last head and last particular of it, do mainly decide the questions incident here, and make way for the right understanding of this Chapter. The first head openeth what is foretold here, the second to whom, the third when it is fulfilled.

Concerning all which we shall put by, 1. some things which we conceive more clearly to be truths and lesse controvertible; 2. Some things more obviously false, and which cannot any wayes be conceived as intended by these words in this vision; And so, 3. the things controverted will be fewer, and we shall have more ready access to speak of them.

The first thing we lay for truth, is, That whatever be meant by Satans restraint here, it is not to be understood absolutely and simply in all respects, but comparatively and in some respect, so as notwithstanding thereof he is still deluding, deceiving, tempting and carrying many to hell, and not wanting instruments to disturb the Saints peace; (though he get not to that successe he would be at in the means he useth, nor yet to that readinesse of instruments and means he hath formerly used) for there are many *dead*, and continuing so as yet, *vv. 5*. he hath *Gog* and *Magog*, many yet without, and possibly also within the Church, in whom he reigneth, though he prevail not with them so as to bring them up against the camp of the most high, and his full binding is reserved till the last day, when he is cast in the lake, and when he getteth his final

judgement, *Jude 6*. And therefore (*Mat. 8*.) he pleadeth that his time was not come, fully and simply to be shut up. Beside, that that warning (that *the devil goeth about seeking whom he may destroy*, 1 *Pet. 5. 8*.) concerneth Christians till the end of the world, they shall have a tempter of him till then, against whom they shall still have cause to watch. Therefore he is not simply bound up in hell; but, in his raging among men, restrained, and that eminently in a great degree: for, as Satan is said to be bound, when he is cast out from having absolute dominion over a man, *Mat. 12*. though he continue to tempt and trouble; so, in respect of the Church he is bound though he may be troubling them, as he may do a particular person; yet getteth he never such absolute and full dominion over them again, in that respect he is restrained and bound; even so here.

2. We think here is understood his most eminent restraining after Christs birth till His second coming; and therefore Christs victories over him being alwayes the longer the greater, it is like to be the last great restraint of Satan, to wit, after Antichrists (at least, begun) ruine, which may be in sundry respects shown to be greater than any of the former, as having some thing, of all the former restraints concurring together in it, and that in an eminent degree: However, that it is most eminent, is clear by these evidences, 1. that he is bound and sealed (in some measure) not only cast from the throne to the earth, but kepted from that liberty which formerly he had on the earth, The expression signifieth certainly a very great restraint. 2. The Saints peaceable reign, sheweth him to be eminently bound; for, that they are now in more respect than at any other time, it is from this, that he is more bound up: and therefore this effect or concomitant thereof, to wit, their reigning, must of necessity be from a more than an ordinary binding. 3. That he may, and must be restrained, and said to be so in a greater measure and in a more eminent manner than agreeth to him, or can be said of him either before or after that, It is therefore a singular eminent binding, which differenceth this time and event from any time or state of the Church before or after it.

3. Concerning the Saints reign for a thousand years, We take it for granted, 1. that it is contemporary with the former; so that both Satans binding, and their liberty and reigning, is for the same thousand years, which is clear; 1. by the repeating of them with the same article in the Greek, *καὶ χίλια ἔτη*, that thousand years, that, that, wherein Satan was bound; so after he hath told that Satans case is to be bound that time, he now telleth what the Churches estate during that time is, without which, the narration had been defective, as to the Churches comfort, had it not been added, that as during that time Satan was bound, so therein the Saints had a joyful liberty. 2. This reigning of the Saints is set down as an effect of his binding; and they are mentioned together, to shew how the one had influence on the other, the restraint of the one importing alway liberty to the other: And it will be unsuitable to apply the Saints reign rather to the time of Satans loosing, than of his restraint, it being certain, that as his kingdom and reign hath influence on her disturbance, so hath his binding on her peace. Beside, it will be heard so to lengthen the world as to make two thousand years to passe after this binding before ever *Gog* and *Magog* come, or to make them fall within the time of the Churches reign; and it wanteth not inconveniences to make them fall together, that are mentioned as successive. We must therefore lay aside that opinion, which maketh these thousand years, of Satans binding and the Saints reign, successive.

A second thing clear of this reign, is, that whatever it be, it is on earth, and that not immediately before the last judgement; for, *Gog* interveneth before the resurrection come, and they, even these that did reign, are beset with *Gog* and *Magog*, who



who comes not to besiege heaven. 2. It is a reign or good condition that Satans binding hath influence to increase, and his loosing to diminish and disturb. Therefore it is not in heaven, to wit, of the souls of Saints, or Martyrs, who are dead; for, the devils binding hath no influence on that. 3. It is such a good condition as is capable of hazards and interruptions by enemies: therefore it is on earth. It holdeth forth then a good condition of the militant Church, and that in a particular limited time, which is not agreeable to it at other times; it cannot therefore be understood of suffering Martyrs, they being glorified in heaven after their sufferings in that time; for, this is no peculiar thing to any one time, but alwayes and in all times a truth.

Thirdly, As it holdeth forth a good condition, so it would seem eminently to hold out the best that they can expect on earth for degree, length of time, and kind of dispensations. This is clear, 1. by the expressions of *sitting upon thrones and reigning*, especially being compared with what went before of the womans fleeing and the Prophets prophesying in sackcloth; this saith, it is an honourable condition and settled, opposite to that. 2. By this, that they are filled Martyrs, or such as were spotlesse in keeping their garments clean, which signifieth much holinesse; and their *living with Christ* also denoteth the same. 3. That they have a *camp*; and look as if all formerly dead were alive again, it signifieth number, they are numerous, all of them are put together, and, as it were, both these killed under Emperours and the beast Antichrist, they arise now in this new state of the Church; See Chap. 7. ver. 9, 10, &c. 4. That Satan is bound so strictly, and that they reign and live peaceably, it sheweth purity and peace in a good degree. 5. For a thousand years, it sheweth it is the longest time that hath been; before, the Church was seen over-run with persecutions, after, with Heresies and Hereticks and their favourers, after that immediately with Antichrist. Now this flourishing reign shall be longer, the last then being the longest, most un-interrupted and compleat dominion, this must be it, all things considered.

Fourthly, It is some good condition peculiar to some one time, not such a reign as believers alway have even when Satan is loose, and *Gog and Magog* comes, but something eminent that is not common to other intervals of the Churches condition, but is more than hath formerly been, or will after it be; for, as it is on the one side the devils eminent restraint, so on the other, it is the Saints eminent reign, so as it was not in such case before these years began, nor yet is to be after they are expired.

A fifth thing we say concerning this reign of the Saints, is, that whatever it be, it is not absolute, either for holinesse, purity, peace, or length of time: which appeareth, 1. because so they reign as Satan is restrained, and his restraint being but partial, so also must their reign be, seeing their absolute reign is reserved for heaven after the last judgement, as his damnation is, it being only in heaven where that which is only perfect is, and what is imperfect is not done away to believers, 1 Cor. 13. till they come there, either in holinesse, or outward or inward peace. 2. It appeareth from this, that while believers here reign in the world, in it is the devil, their their own corruptions, many hypocrites (that being proper to the visible militant Church, till the last day separate all these who offend) and there being yet many dead in the world, who have not gotten victory over the beast, and there being also enemies without, as *Gog and Magog*, that want not enmity, but opportunity: It is therefore clear not to be an absolute freedom that they enjoy, though it be in some extraordinary measure and manner, yet onsets upon, and wrestlings with them are not wanting, and that with some successe, though God graciously disappoint as to the event, and suffereth it not to get to an

helght; yet all His children have their own crosses, and are to look for them to the end of the world. And although this be rejected by *Alstedius*, in his *Diatriba*, as *axioma vulgatum*, but not *probatum*, and saith, these warnings belong to the primitive times; yet who shall consider (that the Scripture joyneth following of Christ, denying of our selves, and taking up of the crosse together, as *Mat. 16. 24.* and elsewhere, and maketh it a mark of sons and of love to be chastised, *Heb. 12.* and a piece of our conformity to Christ the head, *Rom. 8. 28.* and a consequent unto godlinesse alway, *2 Tim. 3. 12.* and many other places) will find it not so easie to reject it, except we would have perpetual duties, such as denying of our selves, &c. and deny that there were such need or use of crosses to believers: who will certainly have corruptions in them to be mortified to the end of the world, and so need the rod for promoting of that.

A sixth thing I suppose is clear, that whatever it be, it is not literally to be understood, and properly as the words sound, but figuratively and spiritually. The particular making out of this will follow in the opening of the words. Yet this we may in general say, 1. that they are figuratively to be understood, not as the letter properly soundeth; for, that the devil is bound with a chain, cannot be proper, but to shew that he is kepted-in; like a violent mastiff in a chain, by Gods sovereignty; so thrones, the souls of these slain, their living and their resurrection is figurative, as the rest who continue dead, signifieth not properly these who continued in the grave, but these in nature; for, it is said of all men, contradistinctly from these living, *the rest of the dead*, &c. yet the last judgement is not come (therefore many lived a natural life then, who did not live thus, but as all men are divided in regenerate and unregenerate, so here they are divided in living and dead to that same purpose). So souls sitting on thrones and reigning with Christ, cannot but be figurative, as that also of the resurrection, there being in the Scripture but one acknowledged, that is proper, which this is not. 2. I say they are to be understood spiritually, which confirmeth the former, that is, this dominion, reign, living, and resurrection of the Saints, must be spiritually understood especially and chiefly: for clearing whereof, understand, that as there is a natural and proper life, dominion and resurrection, so there is one figurative and spiritual which agreeth to all Christians. 1. There is a spiritual slavery and bondage to sin, death, Satan, &c. *Rom. 6.* we were servants to it, led captive by the devil at his will; sold under sin, and its reign, *Rom. 7.* So there is a spiritual dominion to be free from that, made kings unto God, *Rev. 1. 6.* and *Chap. 5. 10.* reigning on the earth. 2. There is a spiritual death, *Eph. 2.* and *1 Tim. 5. 8.* and so there is a spiritual life; *Gal. 2. 21.* 3. There is a resurrection spiritual from the death and dominion of sin, that is it, *Job. 5. 23.* *The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and live:* and this is the in-bringing of many to the Gospel, or the breaking out of it, which is called a resurrection, *Rom. 11.* as there is a resurrection universal in the great day mentioned, *ver. 12.*

I say then, these words here are spiritually to be understood especially, though not only, as is clear: For, 1. this dominion and reign is on the earth. Therefore it is not proper, but figurative, seeing clear Scripture promiseth no such earthly temporal Kingdom to Saints, but warneth them to be alway looking for the crosse and affliction, which could not be if there were a thousand years freedom and temporal reign. 2. This is a dominion common to all Saints as Saints; for, the world now is divided in dead or unregenerate, and living, that is, Believers, and all these living are Martyrs, and such as have not received the beasts mark, (which is the character, *Chap. 13. 14.* and *17.* of all the Elect) whereby is understood all true Believers; But no temporal kingdom is promised to all Saints

Saints as Saints, but what is spiritual is promised. *Ergo, &c.* Yea, there can be no other; for, if all the Saints were temporal Kings, whom should they command? who should be their subjects? yet, without any confusion, spiritual dominion will agree to them all: neither can it be said they are to govern the Reprobates, who continue dead: For, 1. that would imply a distinct discernable separation even hereaway, as if no hypocrite could lurke. 2. The Text supposeth the Church visible and these without to be separated, as having their own Rulers, which appeareth in *Gog's* undertaking afterward, who is not subject to them. 3. There behoved to be many Kingdoms, if every Saint had one now, when they are multiplied and the wicked fewer. This is a reign especially of souls, and it is not for nought so expressed here, as there is a soul-merchandise hinted at by this expression, *Chap. 18. 4.* So these live and reign as the most part of the world, are dead and in bondage, and enjoy not that resurrection; But that is spiritually to be understood, they were dead in sin and not raised thus to reign. Therefore so must the reign of Saints and their life on the contrary be spiritual; for, in this only they are singular. 5. It is a dominion at this time as common to all Saints, so peculiar to them and common to none other; But, no question, many Reprobates have yet dominion in the world, and so live without the Church: for, *Gog* and *Magog* have their own Magistrates then, and are said to come against the Saints, and not to rebel against them, which would have been true if Saints only had born dominion and rule over these: and when the devil goeth out to the four winds, it supponeth great and large territories to be even then without the Church, which certainly wanted not temporal rule. 6. It is such a dominion as Christ hath; for, they reign with Him; as therefore His Kingdom is on earth, so is theirs; But His Kingdom is not of this world, but is spiritual, Therefore so is theirs: for, this, to reign with Christ, speaketh not any new way of Christs reigning, but speaketh a new accession to His Kingdom, of others coming in to partake of it with Him; and is certainly to shew what sort of Kingdom this is, which the Saints shall have, and to contradistinguish it from that dominion that is worldly. 7. It is such a reign on earth as all the Saints have in respect of kind, though not for degree; for, there is but one Covenant and Kingdom, and the same promise is made to all under the new Testament; But that is spiritual, They all (*Chap. 5. 10.*) so reign on the earth. *Ergo, &c.* 8. It is such a reign, as it is a Priest-hood, so are they Kings, as they are Priests. See *ver. 6.* These partakers of this Resurrection, are Priests to God; But their Priesthood is spiritual, and not again of offering outward sacrifices, So must also therefore be their dominion and kingdom. 9. Certainly spiritual mercies are the best, and the Churches condition that floweth and aboundeth most in these, must be the best condition: seeing then this is the Churches best condition spoken of, It must therefore be especially understood spiritually; for, what is commended here, is not as simply commendable to men, but as commendable in a Church, and peculiar to her as such.

*Objct.* If it be said here, Then nothing peculiar is promised to Saints, or Believers in this time, (seeing that dominion agreeth to Saints at all times) which seemeth to be absurd, Therefore something more must be here.

*Ans.* That is granted, that something more is here, as is said: For, 1. now Saints not only reign singularly over their own lusts, but joyntly in visible Churches, and in a Church estate, having all the Ordinances of Word, Sacraments and Discipline amongst them, and these in more purity, power and fruits than for any time before, and in longer continuance. The stamp of Gods authority on His Ordinances shall be more sensible now, than before. 2. Though it be not a temporal thing that their reigning consisteth in, yet shall they have

more temporal freedom than formerly; the devil shall not make the course of the Gospel neither by open violence, nor by Antichrists deceit, but still there shall be Churches either in kingdoms where they shall have law and allowance for their profession, or amongst enemies, and their enemies shall be restrained from being able to put them in such doleful conditions as they have formerly been into; thus the Gospel shall be countenanced with publick authority, which was *Chap. 12.* And beside, they shall have freedom against Antichrists dominion with a more full performance of promises of the Spirit, which they had not then.

A seventh thing concerning this dominion, is clear, that it implyeth as more spiritual, so more temporal, peace and freedom than at any other time (putting the continuance of it and all together) and though it doth not mainly and especially, yet, in some measure, it doth take in outward peace in their condition also: which appeareth, 1. from Satans eminent restraint, which hath influence also on the Churches temporal peace as well as spiritual, so it followeth in some part as the other. 2. It appeareth from the event after his loosing, their temporal peace is then marred, therefore they had it by the devils restraint in some measure, otherwise they reign when *Gog* is high, as before spiritually in a good measure. 3. The printing out of this reign, as having a more continued eminent honourable profession of the Gospel, not common to other times; and it being opposit, probably, to the Saints suffering times also when their Prophets were in sackcloth, and the Church forced to flee; It's like, it holdeth out a temporal freedom suiting with these ends and freeing them from the bondage they lay under before; for, if in suffering times, Saints still reign spiritually, Then that new engagement of *Gog* and *Magog* would not interrupt it, and so it would be a reign not for a thousand years only, but for the length of the world, for, so they still did reign; Therefore it is not purely and only spiritual. We shall more particularly speak of it according to these grounds in the Lecture following.

Only now from what is said, we may gather, as to the events, that these cannot be expected from the text, which, both of old and of late, men have been fathering wrongfully on this place; as, 1. That Christ should come to the earth personally, and that all the Martyrs and Saints should reign a thousand years before the Resurrection, and have all sorts of pleasure, even unlawful, as drinking, polygamie, &c. This was invented by *Cerintus*, and still counted an heresie by the Fathers, even by these called *Chiliasm* or *Millenaries* by *August. de civit. Dei, lib. 20. cap. 5, 6.* Concerning the *Millenarius* errors about the thousand years, see *Euseb. Eccles. hist. lib. 3. cap. 22.* where he sheweth *Cerintus* his heresie, who added sacrifices and ceremonies also. A second error different from the former, is, That some profess to expect such a reign with Christ on earth, yet so as not to enjoy carnal sinful pleasures, but lawful delights, wherewith (they say) the earth shall then abound: of such an opinion was *Jrenus, Justin Martyr, Lactantius*, and many of the Fathers. This flowed from *Papias*, supposed to be an hearer of *John* the Disciple, (which made his opinion the more to be received) but he was not. See *Euseb. lib. 3. cap. ult.* He also fell into other faults by following tradition contrary to the Word, which is a native consequent of that principle. 3. There was another opinion allowing the Saints Resurrection and Kingdom before the last day on earth, but abounding only in spiritual delights; of such *Augustin* professeth himself once to have been, and so it is like also were many of these Fathers called *Chiliasm*. This was still accounted an error rather than an heresie; but yet there is no such kingdom here.

Again, neither do these opinions spring from this text; As, 1. that before the Resurrection, which shall be general,



The Martyrs (the text saith *all Saints*) shall arise a thousand years and reign with Christ, but in heaven; This is *Piscators* opinion on the place.

2. Some bring not Christ down personally; yet plead for a resurrection of the Martyrs and a reigning of them with the Saints on earth a thousand years before the end of the world, as *Alstedius* doth in his *Diatriba de mille annis Apoc.*

3. Some go on more grossly, and add to that, that Christ in

His personal presence (which is not spoken of in the Text) is to reign with them on earth: Thus *Henry Archer*, and some others of late. All these thwart with, and are contrary unto the grounds formerly laid down.

4. Others also that begin these years too soon, or expect too great a temporal kingdom, or an absolute universal freedom to come, may see the groundlessness thereof from what is said.

## LECTURE II.

Verf. 1. *And I saw an Angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand.*

**I**T would follow that we should lay down somewhat more particularly to shew wherein this good and excellent condition of the Saints here spoken of consisteth, as it is holden forth according to the preceeding grounds; by which we may see it is no uncouth nor strange thing, that is here spoken of, though (as the manner of this Book is) the expressions be strange-like; and this prejudice being once admitted, that some peculiar mysterie, and unheard of in any other place of the Scripture, is contained here, it hath occasioned the many mistakes about the meaning thereof. In sum then, we conceive this place to hold out a flourishing and good condition for some time, of the Church militant in the dayes of the Gospel, in these six, peculiarly agreeing to that time and going together, opposit to six things wherein the low condition of the Saints consisteth.

1. In pure Ordinances and an abundance of the knowledge of the Gospel: for, if that be a special thing wherein and whereby Christ doth reign on earth himself, this being the rod of his power, *Psal. 110. ver. 2.* It is suitable that this be the first thing of the Saints reign, who reign with him when he reigneth, even as the Church is made to flee, when the purity of Ordinances is obscured.

2. It consisteth in the power of Ordinances upon Professors, by bringing them out of the bondage of sin to the liberty of the sons of God, which is to reign and to be free indeed. And it would appear that much of this good condition must certainly be in that dominion over sin, opposit to that natural slavery and death by it, under which the most part of the world lyeth, Therefore is the word *blest and holy is he that is partaker of this resurrection, ver. 6.* and for this they are called *Priests unto God*, and opposed to the dead world, *ver. 5.*

3. It consisteth in the plurality and abundance of Professors their embracing this Gospel, many Nations setting their face toward *Zion*, and joyning themselves to the Lord. This, *Chap. 11.* is given as a special evidence of Christs reign when the Nations become His: and thus their reigning is opposed in respect of their multitude to the fewness of the sealed ones who were before, *Chap. 7.* (the two last parts being compared together) when they were shut up in the Temple, *Chap. 11. ver. 1.* and 2. Then neither Christ nor they seemed to reign; but when the temple is again opened at the end of that Chapter, then beginneth their dominion; even as their former purity and light is opposed to the darkness and errors that went before, as *Judah* is said to rule with God, *Hosea 11. ult.* in respect of *Ephraims* bondage in error.

4. It consisteth in a visible, bold, publick profession of these Saints by a Church-state, not only worshipping privately, as when the woman fled to the wilderness, but openly as when the Prophets put off their sackcloth, and are taken up to heaven, when there are Nations together, and the Temple open, and Religion avowed and Discipline exercised, then they reign; this is opposed to their former lurking.

5. It is in outward freedom, sometimes they are persecuted-

and are not free to bear office in military or civil employments under heathens, to buy and sell under the beast, *Chap. 13.* now, either God giveth them favour in the eyes of rulers, or restraineth their malice by some counterballancing thing, or turneth them to be worshippers of him, as he did *Constantine*: Thus they reign when they have law for them. In which respect, (*Chap. 12. 9.*) it is said, the Kingdom of our Lord is come, when heathen persecution is stopped and Religion is countenanced, and Kings become nursing fathers to the Church; all the Saints do not become Magistrates, but God maketh Magistrates Saints or friends to them who are so.

6. The sixth thing wherein this good condition consisteth, is the length of time it continueth, which at least is a long time beyond any former cessation and peace they have ever had, it is a thousand years. In these we suppose the good condition here holden forth to consist, the particulars whereof will appear more in opening of the words. We would only understand it with these caveats, lest we extend it too far in our expectation beyond what the Scripture in this place giveth warrant for: and these three extremes are to be guarded against. It is not therefore, 1. an absolute freedom in an height of superiority in temporal or spiritual privileges, but in a good degree, being compared with the Churches condition at other times. It is the most free and longest time of the Churches peace with greatest light, holiness and number of Professors; but cannot be extended so as we may warrantably think that there should be no crosses nor hypocrites nor offences amongst the people of God during that time. 2. That good condition cometh not instantly to an height, and to the chief top of it, but by degrees from lesser to greater, from a day of small things to greater: for, even as the Churches low condition under Antichrist and her prophets prophesying in sackcloth and Antichrists dominion came not to an height at once (though all these conditions be accounted for such a definite time, to wit, from their beginning and first working, till they come to their height) so is it here, The Saints good condition, is to be reckoned from the beginning and rise of their reign, though it come on by degrees to an height. 3. We would not think, during this time, but that there may be some partial interruptions of this good condition, and seeming, if not real, (in part at least) declinings from it; for, that is not understood in any condition, that it shall continue always alike, the Church may have difficulties now, as Antichrist had opposition during the time of his reign; But it is meant, 1. that during that time, enemies shall never universally eclipse the face of a visible Church, as at other times, so as to make her flee to hide her self: and that in the upshot, the Saints shall ever be gainers even here, though for a time they may be strained and wrestle, yet it shall not be now: as *Chap. 13.* where the beast maketh war and overcometh them, but, as it is, *Chap. 17.* the Lamb, with the chosen and faithful that are with him, shall make war with the enemy and overcome in end, though they want not enemies even then, it is not then wholly uninterrupted

red and constant. This being the truth of the good condition holden forth here, we may see how unwarrantable it is either with some of old, or others of late, to abuse this place unto an absolute dominion; and that we may be put from the expectation of such a strange thing from this Text, (though the expressions be strange) and that, what ever be meant by it, yet we may be sure no such uncouth thing (especially temporal) is contained in it, as men dream of. We would have you considering, beside what is said before, these three.

1. Consider that this, what ever it be, is contemporary with some of the principal prophecies going before; it being an explicatory vision, it must belong either to the time of the seals, trumpets or vials; for the seals begin after Christ, and continue till Antichrist begin, (under-hand at least) to work; this is certain. 2. The trumpets follow, and continue till Antichrists begun fall; this is also certain. 3. That the vials succeed the trumpets and carry on Antichrists ruine, and the state of the Church to the end of the world, is also cleared before, Chap. 11. and Chap. 16. So that for the period of this vision the devils final overthrow is the same with the period of the vials; for the sixth overturneth the beast, and the seventh vial bringeth with it the next more universal overthrow to the devil, which can be fixed at no other term, but the end of the world, when the devil is cast in the lake, where the false prophet was, which kniteth the casting down of these enemies together in an immediate successive way, as the last two full victories which Christ shall have; which confirmeth what is said. Now, this being truth, it must follow then, that these thousand years are contemporary with one of these prophecies, seeing they go before the end of the world, and are at some certain time, therefore we must understand so this kingdom and dominion of the Saints, and binding of Satan, as must be agreeable and competent to one of these prophecies, and the events foretold in them: But if we will look through all these prophecies, we will find the Church having enemies and the Saints having their difficulties: under the seals there is open persecution, under the trumpets there is Antichrists tyranny, and under the vials (look but the fifth vial, Chap. 17.) these Kings war against the Lamb: and see the sixth, Chap. 16. there are in much vigour against the Church, the beast, false prophet and dragon, sending out unclean spirits, that with many do prepare to bring them up to battel against the Lord. See also the seventh and last, the devil is not yet taken till the end, he hath a fresh loose not long before it, by *Gog* and *Magog*. Now if so be, where will this absolute dominion of the Saints for such a time appear? This one consideration well grounded, will overturn that conceit; for, this dominion is either contemporary with these, and so not absolute; or it is successive to these, which to say, 1. doth contradict that truth, that the vials bring the end. 2. It contradicth this truth, that by this vision, that prophesie of the vials (especially the seventh) is explained, otherwise the seventh vial is left without any particular event. 3. By this the world will be lengthened long, we being yet but about the beginning of the fourth vial, three vials being to come, then a thousand years after that *Gog* and *Magog* before the end, it would seem exceedingly to lengthen these dayes, which for the Elects sake are shortened. We conclude then, it is such a good condition as must consist with some of the difficulties of the Church, mentioned in the former prophecies: for, though the Saints good condition here only be set down, yet are we to read the state of the enemies in some other place, it being ordinary in this prophesie to set down first one event, as it is by the vials told what is become of enemies, and then to set down another contemporary with it, as here, how it was with the Saints.

2. For removing this strange thought, we would consider the Prophets manner of professing good to the people of God;

How do *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah*, *Daniel*, *Ezekiel*, *Zachariah* speak of the Jews estate after the captivity? and how do all speak of the dayes of the Gospel in general, as *the weak shall be as David*, *their horns shall be iron*, and *their hoofs brass*, and *they shall tread the Nations*, *they shall lie down and none shall make them afraid*, and many such like? Yet if any would draw from them a temporal happiness, or an absolute freedom, would not the event (the best commentary) confute him? Take the prophesie of *Daniel*, wherein often it is said *the Saints shall take the kingdom*, which is no temporal thing, nor this intended here, as appeareth in that it is a Kingdom not for a thousand years but for ever. Now, it being certain that such manner of speaking and expressions, are usual to the Prophets when they set out spiritual mercies or temporal deliverances that are but partial, and in their events have been inferiour to what the expressions literally bear (though they be in themselves great and glorious) and this being clear all alongst this prophesie, that *John* followeth the expressions and manner of the Prophets in other things, is it not then safest to expound the events prophesied of by him in such expressions, by the events prophesied of by them in the like? so that the applying of their prophecies to the events wherein they were fulfilled, may be a commentary to clear what sort of events are understood here.

3. Consider *Johns* way in this same vision: certainly some things, yea, many, are not to be applied according to the letter, but in a spiritual way to be understood, as these expressions (*ver. 6.*) of the first Resurrection, must be necessarily meant of rising from sin; for, it is a resurrection opposed to the sinful dead world, which continue dead and did not rise. 2. It is such a Resurrection, as upon which, freedom from the second death doth flow; but that is not a bodily Resurrection, but a spiritual; for many at the last day rise bodily to contempt, *Dan. 12.* which sheweth that that place speaketh of the last Resurrection. And, 3. It is such as the want whereof maketh men liable to the second death, and it is not the want of the first bodily Resurrection according to the *Millenaries* themselves, (for then, seeing, as they say, none arise first but Martyrs, none should be saved but Martyrs) but the not being born again, that secludeth from heaven; and that expression concerning the priviledge which these that are raised here have, *They shall be Priests to God*, must either be spiritually understood, or we must, with *Cerinthus*, bring back again the sacrifices, and ceremonial and typical worship, contrary to the whole strain and series of the Gospel. And seeing the former part of that *6. ver.* is necessarily figuratively and improperly to be understood, why not the latter part also, *that they shall reign with Christ*? We conclude then, that here there is no absolute temporal Kingdom promised, but such as we have before hinted at.

We come now to speak of the second head wherein the question lyeth, and that is concerning the parties who are partakers of this good condition, which hath also sundry branches.

1. It is questioned, whether our Lord Jesus shall come personally to reign with the Saints on earth? We answer negatively, there is no ground to expect our Lords presence personally and visibly to converse on earth with his people, though we will not say, but there is in this time an eminent measure of his presence by His Spirit and Power in his Ordinances, and manifestations in his dispensations more than ordinary; that is not controverted. But that personal presence we deny, on these grounds, 1. Because the Scripture is silent of it, and knitteth ever Christs personal coming again and the last judgement together, as holding that out to be his errand. If it be said here, They are said to reign with Christ, Therefore he must be on earth. *Answer*: It followeth not, no more nor when it is said, *Gen 5. Enoch walked with God three hundred years.*



or, that we suffer with Christ, *Rom. 8*, or converse with Him, Therefore He is on earth suffering with us or walking with us; yea, the very contrary followeth from this place, that He is not on earth: which may be cleared, 1. thus, So Christ reigneth with His Saints and they with them, as they do other things with Him, that is, suffer with Him, and walk with Him, &c. But that implieth not a personal presence, but a spiritual, Therefore so doth this. And indeed Saints reigning, being in their sense (and in a part truth) opposite to Saints suffering, must not then suffering with Christ be opposite to reigning with Him? And so to reign with Christ, will imply, 1. a spiritual presence of Christ with them; 2. a common interest and account of dominion, as there is a common interest and account in their suffering. Thus to reign with Him, differenceth their good condition from the good of worldly mens conditions, even as to suffer with Him differenceth the nature of their sufferings from worldly mens crosses. 2. It is clear from this, that it is not said simply *they reign*, but *reign with him*: the peculiarness of the dominion for these thousand years, is not on His side, but on theirs; for, He reigneth before and after; only for these thousand years, the Saints who did not so reign formerly, are admitted to reign with Him: therefore as His reign is ordinarily, so is it now: for, there is no change on His side; but ordinarily it is not personal, but by His Spirit and Ordinances, Therefore it is so now, and no otherwise.

2. Either this personal reign of Christ, is after the day of judgement, as the old *Chiliasists* thought; or, it is immediately before it, or during it, as these that would have Christ continuing, as it were, His judgement that long time, as *Tyllingast* and others of late. But the Text overturneth all these, 1. It is not after the day of judgement: for, *Gog and Magog* are before the day of judgment; yet *Gog and Magog* are after these thousand years, Therefore it cannot be expected after it. 2. It is not immediately before: for, 1. *Gog and Magog* intervenes, and the dominion of the Saints is interrupted before that. 2. At the day of judgement, Christ is not on earth, but cometh in the clouds from heaven. See *1 Thessal. 4. vers. 16, 17.* the Lord Himself shall descend, Therefore He is not on earth; then shall we that are alive be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so He is there, and we shall be for ever with Him: Where both these are clear, 1. That at the day of judgment, Christ is not on the earth, Therefore are the Saints caught up to meet Him. 2. It is clear, that He and they return not to the earth, but they abide in heaven for ever with Him: for, their continuing with Him for ever, is expressly subjoyned as the fruit of their being caught up, and so supponeth that it is not to be on the earth.

3. We argue (for preventing an objection) thus, At Christs personal coming before the end of the world to reign, He either continueth in the world till the end, or He returneth again to heaven till the time of judgement; But neither of these can be found: not that He abideth on the earth after the thousand years; for, 1. then He would be longer on earth than a thousand years. 2. He must continue to reign, (which standeth not with the definit time of the Saints thousand years dominion) or He must be straitned and encompassed by *Gog and Magog* with the Saints; and this were to make Christ suffer again personally, which cannot stand with the state of His exaltation. Beside that, this would suppose Him to be on earth (contrary to what is said before) at the day of judgment. Neither can it be said He ascendeth and returneth: for, 1. that would make three comings of Christ, whereas the Scripture speaketh but of two. 2. It would divide His second coming from the ends which the Scripture giveth of it, that is, to subdue all His enemies and fully to deliver all His people, *Heb. 9. 27, 28.* And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but

after this the judgement: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation. Where these are clear, 1. That there is but a second coming again of Christ and no more. 2. That that perfecteth the salvation of His people. 3. That there is no intervening coming between His first coming and this. Now, all this would be left undone, if He should before the end ascend again, and leave the Saints in a new difficulty, which cometh upon them at the close of the thousand years.

I might further add multitudes of absurdities that this inferreth, as, 1. To what end cometh He? Is it for His peoples comfort temporal, and will He leave them then in a new strait, or continue with them, and not prevent it? 2. How converse He on earth? either He must still be in the company of all His Saints, and so cannot be in one place, contrary to the nature of His true body, or He must be sometimes with some, and sometimes with others, and that consisteth not with this, that they all reign with Him a thousand years, if to reign with Him be to have His bodily presence, some must alway want it: for it cannot be so on earth with the Saints, not yet made in their bodies spiritual, as it will be in heaven in the enjoyment of His presence. 3. By His descending, He behoved either to bring all the Saints from heaven to an earthly glory, to eat and drink again, contrary to the Scripture that saith they shall be like the Angels; or, He must leave them in heaven, and so their felicity, by wanting of His bodily presence, (in which the happiness of heaven in a great part consisteth) is, however it be, impaired. 4. Let it be asked, what cometh of Saints for these thousand years, when He reigneth on earth? either they live all that time, which none can expect, or else they die, and then by death they are not to be with Christ, (which being with Him, maketh the Saints willing and desirous to be loosed, *Philip. 1. 21.*) but are for a time to depart from Him: And so in sum, Christs being here on earth, proveth neither for the comfort (simply at least) of Saints in heaven nor in earth: We would therefore much improve the ways of presence we have, (to be at a higher degree in these) and contentedly suspend the enjoyment of Christs personal presence till we get it where He is.

It will not remove those absurdities, to say with one, to wit, *Tyllingast*, 1. That this personal coming of Christ, is the same with His second coming to judgement, and that these thousand years and what followeth, is the day of judgement, as *where*, continued and current. Nor, 2. to say, That the Saints continuing on earth, during such a time, doth not mar their glorious condition, more than it doth to Angels to be abroad in their employments. To the first we say, That at Christs coming, He cometh in flaming fire with all His holy Angels, the powers of heaven are shaken, faces gather paleness, and mens hearts fail them for fear, &c. And it is certain that this insurrection of *Gog and Magog* against Christs Church, is after these thousand years: Now is it credible, that during the time of judgement, while Christ in such glorious majesty is sitting as Judge, that there can be heart in any creatures to essay, much less in any measure (as is here supposed) to effectuate such an undertaking against Christ and His Saints as this of *Magog* is? especially if we consider, that the same Author maketh the destruction of the beast to follow Christs personal coming, as the first act of His judgement: and to suppose such an interruption, (or mutiny against the Judge) as this, is not consistent with the nature of Christs judicial procedure.

To the second, although we say not, that it is inconsistent with the Angels glorious condition to serve their Master anywhere by executing His commands; yet, is it never said, that Satan is loosed on them, and that they are encompassed, as it is said here of the Saints, who are after these thousand years straitned, they, as it were, having the defenders part and the

the wicked as the stronger party pursuing them ( therefore is their state then differenced from their good condition preceeding : ) and can that consist with a glorified condition ? We may presse this opinion, thus, If all the departed Saints be bodily to be raised and to reign with Christ these thousand years, Then all the dead reprobates are at the close thereof bodily raised and joyned with *Gog* and *Magog* in the pursuing of the Saints and encompassing of them : for, the wicked live so after the thousand years as they did not before, and their following condition after that time, is opposed to the former during that time, as is clear. That the wicked also after that time prevail and the Saints suffer, the opposing of the Churches estate after

that time to its good condition during that time, doth also confirm : for, all on earth are then divided in these two, the holy City who are encompassed, and these who do encompass. And seeing these wicked reprobates cannot be comprehended under the first party that suffereth, They must therefore be comprehended under the last who for the time prevaleth : and so the pressing of this bodily resurrection and reign of the Saints upon earth, will infer also a bodily resurrection and reign of the wicked reprobates, which will be a sixth monarchy, hitherto not mentioned. And herefore if this last be absurd, and so to have no ground from this place, we must account the former to be such also.

## LECTURE III.

Verf. 1. *And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand.*

**T**He second thing questioned concerning the parties reigning, is, whether they that reign thus, be such as have formerly lived and died, and after death are made to reign ? Or, whether they be such as have not yet seen death ? *Ans.* We say these that reign with Christ here are not Saints departed, but such as never yet died, living Saints, members of the militant Church. We shall first confirm the negative, to wit, that they are not dead Saints, that is, such as once lived and died, and thereafter are brought to this life again ; which is three wayes expressed by several Authors, 1. not such as have been Martyred and brought again to live on earth with their bodies, as the old *Millenaries* conceived : For, 1. that maketh all this literally to be understood of the resurrection, which we shew to be spiritual : and if this be a spiritual resurrection, Then it is not corporal ; But that it is spiritual, may be thus made out, It is a resurrection that agreeth to Saints that never died bodily, Therefore it is spiritual. The antecedent is thus proven, This resurrection agreeth to all who are then living with Christ ; But the living Saints must at that time be living with Christ, or else they must be comprehended under the common reckoning with the dead world, which cannot be ; or, we must say there are no Saints in the militant Church then, which is false, this being certain that the end is not yet come. 2. This cleareth it, that it maketh folks free of the second death, and only that doth it, as is said. 3. It crosseth the scope, which is to shew the state of the militant Church on earth, whereof dead Saints are not members. 4. It is such Saints as may be in their dominion encompassed and straitned by *Gog* and *Magog* ; But it were hard to bring Saints from heaven to that condition. 5. How should they live on earth a spiritual life not eating nor drinking, or a naturall life again in these ? both which are absurd. 6. This would make a resurrection and judgement beside the one universal judgement and resurrection, against the Scripture : that, 1 *Thes.* 4. speaketh of all living then, and the dead that die before, to go together to meet Christ. 7. What cometh of them after the thousand years reign expireth ? It is they who did reign who are encompassed ; But that cannot be said of Saints raised again : For, 1. then they would be longer on the earth than a thousand years. 2. They would be interrupted in their reign ( this lasteth but a thousand years ) Therefore it is not such who reign. 8. If it be of such, it must either be before or after the day of Judgement ; neither of which can be, as is cleared.

2. Again, others say that it is Martyrs rising again a thousand

years before the general resurrection, but enjoying a dominion in heaven not on earth, ( as is *Piscator's* opinion. ) This cannot be : For, 1. It is against the scope as the former. 2. This dominion is of all Saints then living ( as we shall hear ) Therefore it is not peculiar to Martyrs. 3. This dominion and these who reign here, are interrupted in their dominion, which can be said of none in heaven. 4. It is shown before to be on earth. 5. It would be also more than an thousand years reign before the general resurrection, or else they must be again suspended in it, which is absurd.

3. Neither can it be applied to Martyrs and Saints living under Antichrist and other persecutors, who being dead are said to reign by their souls enjoying of Christ in glory ( as *Parvus* and ordinarily Interpreters do apply it ) which is a truth that these Saints do reign even after their death ; But it cannot be applied to these who reign here, 1. because that reign is in heaven ; this meant here is on earth. 2. That reigning of Saints departed, is continual in all times ; this is peculiar to these thousand years. 3. That of Saints in heaven cannot be interrupted ; this may be. 4. It agreeth to Saints in their most suffering condition, even that of *Gog* and *Magog* ; for even then they overcome and reign, so this is a peculiar good condition, and contradistinguished from the Churches former hard straits and is interrupted, as it is afterward, *ver.* 7. by that of *Gog* and *Magog*. It must necessarily follow then, that they are living Saints on earth, and then in some more than an ordinary flourishing condition. Concerning whom we are to enquire, 1. If it be all Saints then living, or some few only ? 2. What these contradistinguished one from another are ? who these Martyrs, and who these others are ? 3. How they continue for a thousand years to reign, if in their own persons, or in their successors ?

And we say. 1. they are living Saints, who never yet did see death, nor Martyrs formerly killed, but who then shall be followers of the Martyrs faith and practice, and keep themselves from pollutions, such as are ( *Chap.* 14. ) called *virgins*, who are here meant : For, 1. it is on earth, as is said. 2. It is of all Saints then living thus contradistinguished from the rest of the dead world. 3. It is not the same individual persons, who live and reign all these thousand years, but they in their successors, The Church being one body, dieth never, even as the witnesses continued all the space of one thousand two hundred and sixty dayes, and died and rose again in their successors ; so it is here, one generation succedeth to another, Now, if it were Martyrs restored to life, Then 1. it would be peculiar,



culiar to them, which is here common to all. 2. Then they would live still and be in new hazard by Satans loosing, which is impossible; for, it is the same Saints that are encompassed by *Gog and Magog*, who formerly did reign, when Satan was bound, Therefore it is living Saints continuing in a succession for many years, They who in their life did reign, suffering after death in their successors by *Gog and Magog*, even as their predecessors who suffered in their life, yet after death reign in their posterity: The one expoundeth the other, and sheweth that both the reigning of Martyrs, and suffering of these Saints, must be verified in their successors: for, all who live and reign, are partakers of this resurrection; but many living Saints, who never died, must either be partakers of it, or they must be among the dead, Therefore it is a spiritual resurrection to living Saints.

Again, the Martyrs reign here would be then either alone, or with others; and none of these can be said without absurdity: Therefore it is the living who are understood. Add, they must live and reign who did not so reign before, Therefore it is not they.

Beside, this reigning agreeth to such as it can be interrupted in, and be at one time and not at another; which cannot be said of Martyrs glory, which is alway alike, Therefore cannot this be applyed to Martyrs in glory, nor yet on earth in their own persons, and therefore it must be in their successors.

Fourthly, Neither can it be said (as *Forbes* doth) that this reign of Martyrs is in respect of their good account in the Church after their martyrdom, in which respect, some apply their receiving white garments under the fifth seal, saying, that they that were reproached before in their deaths, are afterward honoured in their memories, which they begin at *Constantine's* time, when the publick profession of Religion became honourable. This, I say, cannot be said as intended here: for, 1. This is not peculiar to a thousand years or definite time; for, in the Church, that was alway honourable. 2. Those two reign here, are Saints on earth, and all Saints and Martyrs under Antichrists tyranny, which was not begun then, this application maketh it peculiar to some. 3. Beside, Martyrs under Antichrist after that, were as much liable to reproach as these formerly were under heathens, and therefore that cannot be applied here. 4. Add, that these who reign here, are the same who afterward are encompassed and straitened by *Gog and Magog*; But that cannot be the same and good name of Saints departed, but living Saints themselves in their persons, Therefore it is not that which is intended here.

These being on the negative part then laid by, we come to the affirmative: and seeing it must be living Saints, who at the time here designed shall be members of the militant Church, It is, first, questioned, whether all the Saints then living are to partake of this good condition, or some only? that is, if it be a special privilege of Martyrs or sufferers only who shall suffer during this time? Or, if it be common to all? *Ans.* This good condition whatever it be, is in some degree, and in its kind, common to all the Saints, who then shall be living, not so much distributively to all and every one of every kind, as generally to Saints of every kind, as collectively making up one body, of whatever sort and degree they be, if they be Saints and Believers: even as the low condition of the Churches suffering, will not prove, that every individual Saint suffereth, but that in common the Church hath a suffering estate; so its good condition will not prove, that all have it alike so, but that generally they have a flourishing condition in common. And that it is thus to be understood, appeareth, 1. In that these who live here, &c. are contradistinguished from the dead: now all living Saints they must either thus reign, or they must be comprehended under these who continue dead, seeing all the world is distinguished in these two; But none of them can be

amongst the dead, Therefore all of them must partake of this good condition. 2. It is for this end, that not only Martyrs, but such as have not received the mark of the beast, nor worshipped his image, are mentioned; and by these no other can be understood, but such as in following the Lamb have kepted themselves free (as *virgins*, Chap. 14.) from the common snares and sins that others are taken with and given unto. Hence, (Chap. 13.) these are given as the properties only of those who are written in the Lambs book of life, and so mentioned here as the properties of all the elect Saints to whom this belongeth. 3. The privileges here mentioned, are common to all, as to reign with Christ, to be blessed and holy, freed from the second death, to be Priests to God, &c. These are common to all Saints, Therefore so is that good condition also that hath these in it. From which we may see how unwarrantable it is from this to apply any singular felicity to some few Martyrs, or others, which is common to all.

The second thing to be enquired in the positive, is, Whether these living Saints that are raised to reign, be the same individual persons that did suffer, and so now reign for a thousand years? Or, if it be to be understood of the Saints in their succession, as the Catholick Church in its continuance from the beginning unto the end. This will answer an objection, where it is said, That those who were set on the thrones, were those formerly beheaded for the testimony of Jesus. Now, those beheaded, we say, are not in their own persons raised again and set on the throne, but in their successors in the same faith and profession, the generation preceeding reigning in the generation succeeding, as the generation succeeding suffered in the generation preceeding; even as in common speech we say, The *Babylonians*, *Romans*, &c. governed the world for so many years, though the same individual persons lived not so long. Or, as it is said in *Dan. 7. 18.* the Saints shall take the kingdom which shall never have an end, importeth not, that in the dayes of the Gospel (of which time that speaketh) no Saints shall die, but that the Saints spiritual reign shall never be interrupted, and that there shall be a continual succession of a Church and of Saints; so here, we take not the same individuals to continue but their race, as one kind or stock (to speak so) the Church being one body, as the *Babylonians*, *Romans*, &c. are one Empire: Saints therefore here, are not personally or individually to be understood, but successively and in their general acception, as one body; so that during this time they shall have a visible profession, and there shall alway continue a visible Church-state in the world. So it is neither therefore Martyrs raised again, nor Saints living still all that time, but generally in their successors, This being the scope, to shew the estate of the Church in general and not of individual Saints. This may be confirmed, 1. from what is said, If they be the same, then Martyrs dead must live again, (this being a good condition to the Church on earth) and this is contrary to what hath been proven. 2. Then these Saints so raised again, must only be the Saints on earth at that time, for all partake of this. 3. Then these Saints must again in their own persons be encompassed by *Gog and Magog*: for, it is these Saints that are encompassed who did reign, *ver. 9.* and therefore so must they that reign be expounded to be the former sufferers, as they are accounted afterward the besieged; But that cannot be personally understood, Therefore neither the former; for, then were they not to continue only a thousand years on earth, and to live so long only, but much longer: both which have many absurdities with them, as that whoever died during that time, would be known not to be an Elect, and whoever lived that long, would be certainly known to be so; then also these who were born after the beginning of these thousand years, would not live so long in this reign as these who went before: it must therefore certainly be understood as it may in its continuation.

tinuance agree to all Saints, as well as in the events, which may well be in succession, so that what one wanteth in these who follow, he hath it in these who went before. And thus, generally, it setteth out the visible Church in her good condition during that time; for, it is still the same Church which reigneth. We understand it then, thus, that as it is said of the Prophets, (*Chap. 11.*) that they died and rose again, which yet is not to be understood of the same individual persons, but of their followers and successors in that spirit and cause (as *John Baptist* was successor to *Elias*; and in that respect is called *Elias*;) So the slain Saints now are said to rise, when the face of a visible Church, which was long eclipsed, as if it had been buried with these Martyrs, doth now in the same truth and cause shew it self again in new professors, as if these old Martyrs had risen again to continue that Church-face of purity and worship, for which once they suffered. And this phrase of rising again, is in this sense not unusual in the Prophets, as, 1. when they would signify a restoration from a low condition, that is marvellous and such as men would think no less impossible than to raise the dead, as, *Ezek. 37. 11.* 2. When the restoration is numerous and to make up an hopeless sad condition by such a new comfort, as *Jeremiah* in his *31. Chap. ver. 18.* speaketh to *Rachel*, mourning for her children. 3. When it is in the same truth, profession and cause, as is laid of the Prophets, *Chap. 11.* so it may be of Professors here, the time also being one. 4. When men have the same bold spirit to resist and suffer, as if these old Martyrs had risen to preach down Antichrist, who for a long time had had peace. Thus was *John* accounted and named *Elias*, *Matth. 17.* and here Martyrs, both under the heathen persecutors and under Antichrist, are named. 1. To shew the Churches freedom from both these tyrannies, that now, these who were undone by both formerly, may boldly profess that truth for which they were persecuted. 2. To shew the numerosness of Saints now as if all were risen. 3. To shew what time it belonged unto, to wit, that after both. 4. To shew what parts and courage these Saints should have, and how fitted they should be both against the open persecution and secret designs of Antichrist. 5. To shew that they who now come to profess the Gospel, are of one and the same Church with these who went before, it being still one woman who travelled under heathens, that fled under Antichrist, *Chap. 12.* and now returneth in her seed to sit upon thrones.

The third thing to be enquired here, is, what Martyrs these are, whether these suffering under heathen persecution, or these who suffer in the time of the beasts tyranny, (which to these of this opinion, is the same time of these thousand years,) or, such as have suffered both under heathen persecutors and Antichrist, preceeding the beginning of these thousand years? We take them to be such whose sufferings are by-past, before these thousand years begin, and not such as are to suffer under it what ever they be, as appeareth, 1. they are said to be once slain, and to rise again before this reign begin, which could not be if their sufferings had not preceeded. 2. They are said to reign a thousand years, which sheweth they begin all together to reign: and therefore their suffering must go before its beginning. 3. The time of their reign is expressly distinguished from, and made successive unto, the time of their suffering. Therefore are they not to be confounded, or their reign made to begin before their suffering. 4. This condition is marked as the outgate of a former strait, and what former strait rather than this, the Saints suffering under Antichrist? therefore that suffering must go before it. 5. The suffering which immediately followeth the thousand years, is, *Gog and Magog*: now, *Gog and Magog* belongs not to Antichrist, but goes immediately before the last Judgement, and comes after the thousand years; Then, these who suffer here,

must either be after the thousand years, which cannot be, or during that time, which confoundeth the Churches good condition and her ill; or, it must be before, and it being none of the former two, must therefore be the latter. 6. Three states of the Church are clearly holden forth here, 1. a suffering state under Antichrist. 2. A good condition during the restraint of Satan, it being ill before. 3. An ill condition after his loosing again, by *Gog and Magog*: therefore as that of *Magog* followeth the thousand years, so that of Antichrist must preceed; for, these thousand years are put in the midst, and distinguished from both. 7. This reign agreeth so to Saints and to such Saints as it did not agree to them before these thousand years, nor can do after. But if these who reign be contemporary with Antichrists dominion, Then Saints would reign so both before and after, and so would not suffer and be in a strait. 8. If (as many think) the killing of Martyrs go before this reign, so must also these killed by Antichrist; for, both are equally installed into this reign, at its entry. Beside, this opinion would confound the Churches suffering condition with this reign which is peculiar to some one time, and differenced from the former, as hath been shewed. Hence followeth, 1. that Antichrists supreme universal reign, is to preceed these thousand years. 2. That then Antichrist is not to be expected a few years before the end of the world; for, no other Antichrist there is, but this beast that persecuteth, before it begin.

Lastly, It is enquired here, if reasonable or senseless creatures shall be partakers of this good condition and change? and how far it shall extend? for, of old, many, as *Lactantius* and others of late, *Burroughs* on *Hosea*, lay these two principles, 1. That the earth shall abound in extraordinary fruitfulness, that the rocks shall drop honey, and the earth be free of storms, &c. 2. That the Saints shall chiefly and largely share of all those temporal things. But we say, 1. as there is possibly more peace now, so God may make abundance of all these things the riser in the earth, as not being wasted with troubles and persecutions as formerly. 2. That God may bless pains, so as to have extraordinary increase, (comparatively with former times) is not impossible, especially if applied to the *Jews*, their land may be brought back to its wonted fruitfulness, to be as once it hath been, though now it be interrupted. 3. That the Saints may enjoy more of these (as being less persecuted or plagued) than formerly, and as having more liberty for industry and publick employments, These may be granted. But that there should be an extraordinary fruitfulness put in the earth, as without pains or industry to bring forth, or with pains more than at any time it did since the fall; or, that, 2. the Saints should be all rich and none poor; yea, that chiefly they should enjoy the riches of the world, these we account false and groundless, and without the least warrant here. And as they are without ground from this place, so are they (as would seem) directly against it and other certain grounds, as, 1. that what is promised here, is especially spiritual. 2. That this promised here, is a peculiar mercy to the Saints; but fruitfulness of the earth would not be peculiar to them, many wicked men being possessors of a great part of it. 3. The delivering of the creature from bondage is reserved for that day, when the sons of God shall be manifested, which is at the last judgement, *Rom. 8. 21, 22, 23.* If then there were a delivery before that, it needed not groan so, for that time. 4. Beside, the promise of the Gospel being spiritual especially, it would be but a diversion to our carnal humors to have such an occasion as temporal abundance to hunt after; and it is the fibness of our affections to creatures, that maketh many profess more delight in such a Kingdom than in that of Grace and Glory, which are uncontroversible. Neither can any think, that the Saints are wronged by this; for certainly, spiritual things are ever preferable to carnal and temporal things. The



The second thing is as groundless as the former, to wit, that Saints then should abound in that affluence of all these temporal riches: for, 1. Christs Promises and Covenant, under the Gospel, run not on these terms, nor are they of that kind. 2. The Lord hath said, that the poor shall be alwayes amongst His People, and that there shall be alway objects of charity to the end of the world. 3. The crosse is spoken of to wait on Believers to the end; and certainly, poverty is no little part of their crosse and conformity with Christ, and a cause of many other crosses to them, which abundance of the things of the world usually keepeth off, as contempt, reproach, straits, &c. 4. The things of this world are accounted still a portion for these of this world, *Psalm 17.* that God, as it were, alloweth them a more large share of these things than He doth the others, to whom (as to young heirs) He hath reserved a better heritage. 5. It were hard to place this good condition of the Church in that which for many ages hath been the condition of the men of this world. 6. If this were promised to them, much riches, power, &c. then might they with a good conscience pray for it, and aim at it, as they may do for things necessary, to wit, health and peace, &c. yet can it hardly be thought, that Believers are warranted to pray to be rich, and to have a temporal dominion, we being commanded, (*Heb. 13. 5.* and *1 Tim. 6.*) to be content, if we have food and rayment. 7. If abundance of outward things were a part of this good condition promised, Then were it generally and equally to be applied to all sorts, whereof yet all, young and old, master and servant, rich and poor, (if such be supposed to continue during that time) are not, nor cannot be capable.

8. This opinion giveth too much way to carnal lusts to let out

themselves on creatures, and therefore is so well entertained by such pallats, (as *Eusebius*, saith of *Corinthius*, that being delighted in these things, he moulded a kingdom agreeable to them) But what do these taste to a spiritual man, being compared with pure Doctrine in the Church with Spirit and power amongst hearers, and with these other things wherein this Kingdom consisteth? If any ask, but what ill is in that last opinion? *Answer.* Beside that it is against Truth, and wrongs the Word, to father any thing on it which it will not own, and so proveth an untender meddling with the holy Word, to which nothing should be added, It doth, 1. alter much the nature of Christs Kingdom and promises to His people, which are ever spiritual. 2. It doth draw affections from things heavenly and spiritual to earthly, and in stead of exercising and engaging their faith to a spiritual dependance on, and delight in God Himself, it doth rather awake their carnal humour to warm with, and to be desirous of, these supposed brave things that are expected, it being easier to engage our carnal part than our spiritual. 3. It often occasioneth want of sobriety among good people, that while they should be taken-up in thinking much of the Gospel, and blessing God for what they enjoy of it, and desiring the furtherance of its spiritual successe, they are by this brought to a lesser estimation of their present condition, still expecting and desiring these strange things. And hardly get these opinions place, but they carry a sway beyond the simple Gospel-promises and privileges in mens estimation, as if these Saints were blessed beyond others, that are brought to heaven any other time, beside that it doth readily engage men in an untender pursuit of earthly things, as if from these supposed promises they had right and allowance so to do.

## LECTURE IV.

*Verf. 1. And I saw an angel come down from having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand,*

*2. And he laid hold on the dragon that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,*

*3. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him; that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that, he must be loosed a little season.*

**T**hat which resteth now to be cleared, is the time, which is six times repeated in this first part of the Chapter, and said to be a thousand years, and this leadeth to the third thing proposed.

Concerning it, there is the lesse hazard what be concluded, if these strange events (formerly rejected) be eschewed: Yet, these things concerning it, we take for truth.

1. That simply considered, it pointeth at some peculiar definite time of the Church under the dayes of the Gospel; and taketh not in, nor belongeth unto, all that time betwixt Christs first coming in the flesh, and His coming again to judgement. For, then, 1. It would not answer the scope, which is to point out some peculiar thing belonging to one time and not to another. 2. It is expressly differenced from the time following it, wherein that peaceable estate is marred by *Gog* and *Magog*, and not unclearly contradistinguished from some loosing or liberty of Satan against the Church before his apprehending here, *ver. 1.* This therefore (which is also *Augustins* judgement, *de Civit. Dei*, lib. 20. cap. 6, & 7.

with many Schoolmen) we think not safe. 2. Whatever definite time it be, this is certain, it designeth a long time simply, and comparatively the longest time of a prosperous condition against enemies, that the Church of Christ is to have in the dayes of the Gospel; for so certainly the often repetition of this number of a thousand years, doth import. 3. Whether it be definitely taken for a thousand years, properly so understood, is more questionable: Although there be no great absurdity so to take it, (if they be placed in their own room) as, for the most part, Interpreters do; yet, I think there is no necessity in it, 1. from what is said of times generally, *Chap. 11.* 2. Because this vision is as obscure in all things as any in this Book, and it will be very unlike then that this time only is literally to be taken; whereas in all this Prophecie no other time by any judicious Interpreter is so literally understood, even those who make them most definite, do yet make them improperly and prophetically to be understood; and, to say all other expressions in this vision are figurative, and only the time (which continually to all is improperly set down formerly) shall here be literal,

is not very consistent with the strain of this Prophecie: for, where dayes and years and moneths are formerly mentioned, no sound Interpreter can take them literally for so many and no more; and what reason can be given of altering the common strain in this obscure place? 3. And, that ordinarily some give it for a rule, that broken times are definit (though they be not alway literal) as three years and an half, &c. yet whole times are ordinarily indefinit in the Scripture, as *Psal. 90.* a thousand years in Thy sight, are taken for a long time, and a thousand generations for many, *Psal. 105.* and ten dayes, *Rev. 2. 9.* According to this rule then, an indefinit acception, will sure best with this place. If any object, or ask, why this time is so often definitely repeated? It may be answered, 1. Because usually by a thousand, a great number or long time is set out in Scripture, as we have said before. 2. Because ordinarily a good condition is set down in a long time, or in expressions setting out a long time, whereas difficulties are mentioned under hours, dayes, &c. (See *Chap. 17.*) and this is done for the Churches comfort: But this cannot infer, that so they are for so many years peremptorily, to be understood: for, 1. It is not ordinary to the Scripture in reckoning of times to be so peremptory even in historical places as by comparing of Scriptures is clear. 2. That number, three years and an half, forty two moneths, one thousand two hundred and sixty dayes, time, times, and half a time, in equivalent expressions (*Chap. 11, 12, and 13.*) is five times set down; yet no judicious Writer will count them therefore literally to be understood, even those who make them definit; though it may be observed, that Papists who make the former time literal, yet make this, that is as often repeated, indefinit.

The greatest question concerning the time, is in the particular application thereof to a certain beginning and close, which is questioned even amongst those that in other things agree, to wit, Whether it be wholly past, *i. e.* begun and ended? or, 2. if fully to come, as not being as yet begun? Or, 3. if current, that is, begun, but not ended? In all which there is diversity. Those who make it fully past, begin at four periods, 1. some at Christs birth, and end at Pope Sylvester the second, a Magician. 2. Some at His death, and end at *Benedict* the third, suffocated by the devil. 3. Others, at the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and so end it in *Gregory* the seventh, or, *Hildebrand*. 4. Most begin it at *Constantine's* reign, making this contemporary with that of *Satan's* being cast from heaven, *Chap. 12.* this is also ended, *anno 1300.* in *Boniface* the eighth, when the Wars against the *Waldenses* began. *Prideaux, de mille annis Apoc.* doth thus sum those of that opinion.

These that make it fully to come, are of four opinions, 1. Some (as the old *Chiliasists*) make it after the day of judgement. 2. Some make it after all the vials, including the day of judgement, as *Archer* and *Alstedius*. 3. Others put it under the seventh vial, after the beasts destruction, in an interval before the end of the world, and the arising of *Gog*, so doth *Made* and some others. Lastly, some make it, as it were, to be a current day of judgement all that time, and to follow upon Christs coming to judgment, thus *Tyllingast*: the former also in their explanation, would seem not much to differ from this.

These who make it running, are of two sorts; 1. Some begin about the year, 1300. when the *Waldenses* arose, and when (according to their accompt) the thousand years of Satans binding from *Constantines* time, expired: this is *Brightmans* opinion, who maketh these two of Satans binding and the Saints reigning to be successive; but this ground at the entry is rejected. 2. Others (only *Cotterius* I find alleaged for this) begin at *Luthers* dayes, 1517. How to decide here is difficult; yet having laid the former grounds, there is the less hazard, considering well the nature of the events, which make these thousand years famous: neither is it uselesse to enquire in it, nor only

for clear applying of this Scripture, but for understanding all the controversie about it; for, if it shall be found, that all of it, or a part of it, is past, it will serve much to clear the nature of all, and be the best refutation of many errors about it, and will help to stay the gadding expectation of stupendious things to come.

That we may proceed, these two generals are certain, 1. That these thousand years belong unto, and are contemporary with some of the former principal Prophecies of *Seals, Trumpets* and *Vials*, which continue the series of events from the beginning to the end. 2. Then this is certain, that the binding of *Satan*, here mentioned, with the kingdom following thereupon to the Saints, must relate and be subjoyned unto some one of these notable loosings that are contained in this Prophecie, which *Satan* hath against the Saints, and must be contemporary with some victory they have over him after these. Now, four of these are mentioned, *Leff. 1.* In all which, Satans liberty preceedeth; his overthrow in part followeth, and then the Churches good condition is subjoyned. The first is his keeping the world under darknesse and Idol-worship; from this he is removed by the white horse of Christ, conquering in the Gospel, *Chap. 6.* 2. He is loose after that, in persecuting by the red horse, *Chap. 6.* and seeking by the red dragon to destroy the woman and her childe, *Chap. 12.* where he is overcome and casten to the earth. 3. He is loose under the first six trumpets, by raising *Antichrist*; and (*Chap. 13.*) by warring with the Saints in him; by the seventh trumpet (*Chap. 11.*) the victory is obtained, and the everlasting Gospel preached, *Chap. 14.* The last is his loosing in *Gog and Magog*, in which he is overthrown, at, or a very little before, the end of the world. Now the question will be, to which of these overthrows we may apply these thousand years of his binding? and so whether it contemporateth with the seals, or trumpets, or vials, for to one of these or some part of them, certainly it relateth; and so may we know whether it be past, presently current, or to come? For clearing whereof, we shall, 1. see what light this place giveth of it self to the timing of it. 2. We shall shew it is neither fully past, nor yet to come fully. 3. That it is current under the vials, beginning with them at the binding of *Satan* after his third loose. 4. We shall give the scope and coherence of this Chapter on it.

And, first, here, concerning the close or expiring of these thousand years, we may gather, 1. that it is a little (how long, none can tell) before the end of the world; for, *Satan's* loosing (*ver. 7.*) goeth before the end, and these thousand years expire before that: therefore these thousand years are not to be expected after the day of judgment, neither at it or immediately before it. 2. It is clear, that it is the last great binding before the last interval of *Satan's* last loosing, which preceedeth his final binding; for, after this immediately *Gog* is loose, and *Satan* is not again restrained, but finally judged. Hence we may gather, 1. That this good condition of the Saints, is the last they are to have on earth, seeing nothing followeth it but Satans loosing and final judgment. 2. That when this must end, *Gog and Magog* succeeds; and so hardly can we say, that these thousand years are expired, Except we say, 1. *Gog and Magog* is come. 2. and that be applied to such an enemy as continueth for a little season, in comparison of the good condition that the Church hath had for a long time before that. 3. If so, we must say, there is no freedom to the Church to be expected after this, such as she hath had before (for, nothing cometh after *Gog and Magog*) which seemeth contrary to the nature and renour of this prophecie, especially of the vials, which encrease *Satan's* binding and overthrow, and their reign, still to the last.

Again, for the beginning of these thousand years, it is clear here, 1. That it cannot begin at the entry of the Gospel, except



we say there is but one interval of the Churches peace under it (contrary to experience) and so divide all the time of the Gospel in these thousand years, and the little persecution of *Gog* and *Magog*, which cannot be granted, for the former grounds. 2. The binding supposeth a loosing to go before it, and what loosing? It seemeth clear by the raising of some Martyrs for the testimony of Jesus Christ: whereby it appeareth, that the great persecution of the Church, even by Antichrist, is to intervene betwixt Christs first coming and this good condition of the Saints, it being ordinary that their suffering condition goeth first, and that their reigning condition and Satans binding cometh thereafter. Beside, 3. It is the last good condition before the end, contradistinguished from her hard condition going before.

From this second, we may proceed then and say, that it is not fully past, Not only from the former considerations, but also, 1. because that would make the Churches low condition and her good condition to be confounded (which yet are expressly distinguished) if that reign fall either contemporary with Antichrists or heathenish persecution. 2. It presupposeth the Antichristian tyranny before its beginning, which cannot be if all the thousand years shall be past already. See *ver.* 4. 3. That which belongeth to the Churches best condition on earth, is not yet come, to-wit, 1. Antichrists ruine, 2. the fulness of the Gentiles, 3. the incoming of the Jews, which are certainly to be looked for; and to make this good condition (which relateth to her best condition on earth, as hath been said) to be already past, would separate it from all these excellent events, which cannot be done. See *Rom.* 11. *ver.* 12, 13. where the Jews incoming is called the riches of the Christian world and life from the death, which, not upon the matter only, but in expressions also, suit well with this place.

From all which then we conclude, 1. that these thousand years are not, nor cannot be contemporary with the seals or trumpets in the first two special periods of the Churches condition, she being in both these, low; therefore must it belong to the time of the vials, which followeth the other. 2. We may conclude then, that this binding of Satan or good condition of the Saints, is not that victory of the Gospel, merely spiritual, by the white horse, *Chap.* 6. Nor that over Satan in *Constantine's* dayes, *Chap.* 12. (both which agree either with seals or trumpets) much lesse is it that of *Gog* and *Magog* at the end yet to come: It must needs follow then, that it is the third binding of the devil by the witnesses rising, *Chap.* 11. the Gospels spreading after Antichrists begun ruine, *Chap.* 14. that is understood here, there being but four in all.

This then we take for certain, that it belongeth to the prophesie of the vials, God having shown in them the down-bringing of her enemies expressly, but leaving the Churches condition to be gathered by consequence; here expressly he sheweth the Churches good condition, contemporary with that: which may further be made out, 1. The Churches good condition must be contemporary with the lowest estate of her enemies; (for their falling and her rising, & *contra*, are still knit together) But the vials hold out the longest series of judgements against her enemies, and the most full, Therefore it belongeth to them; for, during the seals, she is persecuted by heathens, during the trumpets by Antichrist, in the vials the Lamb and these that were with Him prevaile. Secondly, The great things belonging to the Churches good condition, as, 1. the removing or restraining open enemies. 2. The fulness of the Gentiles. 3. The in-calling of the Jews, belong all unto, and fall under the vials (as may be seen by the exposition of *Chap.* 16, 17, 18, 19. preceeding,) *Ergo*, this good condition, (being the Churches best estate) falleth under them also. Thirdly, This good estate of the Saints, and this binding of Satan, contemporary with it, is the last freedom and greatest that the Church hath before the last day, But that is under the vials. *Ergo*.

It remaineth now therefore only to enquire, if the beginning of these thousand years be to be reckoned from the beginning of the vials, or to be restricted unto the seventh after Antichrists fall, as the learned *Mede* doth? We say, it cannot be restricted to the last, but must take in moe, even them all. We shall first confirm the negative part, then the affirmative. 1. It is not to be restricted to the seventh vial; for, then it would make this reign to be a very short time; or, it would make the continuance of the seventh vial disproportionably exceedingly to all the rest: for, *Gog* and *Magogs* opposition certainly falleth under the seventh.

- These thousand years then, according to this, would intervene betwixt the sixth and that opposition, which apparently would be no long time; or, it will fall in the other inconveniences,

2. We grant, that it may be under the seventh at its height (as, under the sixth trumpet, the Churches low condition was at its height) yet, not only in it, because the Churches good and ill conditions are not counted by their highest degrees, but by the kind and series of their estate good or ill. Hence, the Churches low condition is not restricted to the fifth or sixth trumpets only, but it is reckoned for one thousand two hundred and sixty dayes, (which taketh in all the trumpets) because the same strait which came to an height under the fifth or sixth seals or trumpets, is to be reckoned from the first, where it began, and from which it did still grow from one step to another till it came to its height, it being all but different degrees of one condition and not diverse conditions: for, that same Antichrist is stricken at by the first vial, though not overturned wholly (at least) till the sixth; And that Gospel, is preached and professed under it, which groweth still, till it come to this height in a continued victory.

3. If we passe the first vial, it will be hard where to fix its beginning, there being still a gradual difference only amongst them, Therefore these who do passe the first vial, profess uncertainty here, how far to bring on the sixth trumpet with the vials, and where to begin this time; and indeed if we leap over the periods set by the prophesie it self, we will not easily settle, thus, *Mede*, otherwise most accurate and particular in applying this prophesie, is yet put to this stand here; upon the former ground.

4. We have seen, that Antichrists destruction falleth under the sixth vial; then Christ and His Armies ride prosperously, and so doth the Jews conversion fall to be then also, as the same Author interpreteth it; And are not these events and effects of Satans binding, and the Churches reign? so, by the fifth, the whore is destroyed; and (*Chap.* 17. and 18.) all Kings are bound up from impeding it: there the Lamb maketh war and overcometh, so do the called and faithful that are with Him, *Chap.* 17. 18. which belongeth to the fifth vial, the effect whereof is a proof of this: And this certainly must belong to the Saints good condition, and it is opposed to that, *Chap.* 13. where they were overcome, and it intimateth a change on their condition. This then is the first confirmation of this, that these thousand years are to be reckoned from the beginning of the vials, thus, If these thousand years can begin neither after the vials are begun, nor yet before they do begin, Then their beginning must be together, even as almost they end together; But they cannot begin before the first, as is said, nor yet after the first, Therefore they must begin with it, being at the beginning of these vials the Gospel began to spread, and continueth through them all to the last interruption, all of them carrying judgements of the same kind. 2. The third binding of Satan, after his liberty and tyrannie against the Church, beginneth by the vials; But this restraint here mentioned, is that third restraint, *ut supra*, *Ergo*, it is to begin then 3. This binding of Satan, and good condition of the

the Church, is to follow immediately after the Churches return from the wilderness, and the expiring of these one thousand two hundred and sixty dayes, Chap. 11. and 12. and 13. of Antichrists height: for, here the thousand years begin, when the Martyrs are raised, and when these, who were persecuted by Antichrist before, do get liberty; but the liberty that the Church hath under the vials (beginning at the first) is that which followeth upon her low condition in the wilderness and Antichrists height, immediately, and by it the Saints get breathing and liberty to profess the Gospel again. *Ergo*, it is that that is meant here. 4. The reign of the Saints, and the good condition of the Church here, certainly is contemporary with the rising of the Prophets and their taking up to a Church-state, Chap. 11. after the thousand two hundred and sixty dayes are expired of their prophesying in sackcloth; for, if when the suffereth they prophesie in sackcloth, and their low condition set out her low condition, why must not their good condition denote her good condition also? These cannot be separated, but when the Prophets die, in some respect the Church dieth, and when they arise and live, the Saints again must arise and live; but their arising and living, and being received to a publick profession and preaching again in their successours, is at the beginning of the vials, as was shewed, Chap. 11. Therefore this of the Saints rising and living, must begin then also, seeing Prophets and Saints make but one Church, and the one cannot rise without the other, they not being an organized Church, but together. 5. This reign or good condition of the Saints, must necessarily be the same, and contemporary with that estate of the Church on earth after Antichrists height, set out by the seventh trumpet, Chap. 11. But the vials in their rise, progress and close, are contemporary with that seventh trumpet, as is cleared in Chap. 11. ver. 15. Therefore they must begin together. 6. These thousand years are contemporary with that palm-bearing company that are mentioned, Chap. 7. (cleared also and acknowledged by *Mede*) for they succeed the sealed company going before (who are contemporary with Antichrist under the trumpets, as was said on the words; but these also begin and go alongst with the vials: for, immediately they succeed upon Antichrists begun ruine, Therefore these thousand years must be so also. And as there were then, after the 6. Chapter, two principal prophecies to follow, one holding forth the Churches strait condition, and the other its enlargement, so was there a touch of both given by that seventh Chapter in two parts, as was there cleared. And if there be but two states following, one of the sealed one hundred forty and four thousand, which expireth under the sixth trumpet before the vials begin, an other of the innumerable company that follow: we cannot therefore reckon five or six of the vials to that strait condition of the Church, but must take them all in under the Churches enlarged condition, which is opposed to the former: for, all the vials must either belong to the last good estate of the Church in the last part of that seventh Chapter; or many of them must be comprehended under the first part, and be contemporary with that sealed company; But the last cannot be: for, 1. That sealed company and sealing, speaketh a height of strength in Antichrist, and an hiding of the Saints contemporary with her being in the wilderness, whereas the vials speak judgement against her enemies and the Churches return. 2. That sealing expireth when the Church cometh to have a publick profession, and multitudes flock in to her, at which time the vials do but begin. Therefore by this it appeareth that there is a mistake in contemporating the six first vials with the sixth trumpet, it being certain that the sixth trumpet contemporateth with this sealed number of one hundred forty and four thousand. Now, if the vials all of them succeed that shut-up and straited condition of the Church,

Then must they be contemporary with that enlargement, set out by the palm-bearing company, and so with these thousand years. It is also there observable, that the low condition of the Church under Antichrist, and her sealing is reckoned from the sixth seal before ever the seventh be opened, though Antichrist be not in the vigorous pursuit of the Saints, till the fifth trumpet; so that enlargement, which is contradistinguished from it, *ibid.* is to be accounted from Antichrists turn, and the removing of that strait, for which the company of one hundred forty and four thousand were sealed, which beginneth by the first vial, though it cometh not to its height till the sixth or seventh: there is one reason for reckoning both alike from their first beginning. Beside, to shew that these vials or any of them cannot contemporate with the sixth trumpet, the sixth trumpet and they are of diverse matters: that trumpet speaketh Antichrists tyranny against the Saints and his prevailing; the vials, Antichrists ruine and Gods judgement on him. 2. We can hardly give contrary effects to one trumpet, it is not suitable to any other of them. 3. This would make the vials (which are one principal prophecies) contemporary with an other (at least in part with that of the trumpets, whereas no more the vials can contemporate with the trumpets, than the trumpets with the seals, as is said in the preface on Chap. 6. As for that which is said, that Antichrists kingdom is shaken, Chap. 11. before the seventh trumpet blow, *Ans.* It may be answered, that it appeareth that Antichrists height there, is when the witnesses are killed; for then he insulteth, and in the exercise of his tyranny and dominion is in the highest degree: there is no more there mentioned but their rising, Antichrists fear, and a part of the great Cities falling, which is mentioned, not to contemporate these events with the sixth trumpet, but to shew what is the connexion betwixt, and the march and terme differencing the sixth from the seventh, that when the one (the sixth) endeth, then the seventh beginneth, which is then at the same hour, when the witnesses are raised up; then the second wo is past, and the third cometh quickly, there is such connexion betwixt them, as is more fully cleared, Chapter 11.

By all which it appeareth, that these thousand years, beginning at the end of one thousand two hundred and sixty dayes mentioned, Chap. 11. fall to begin about the year, 1560. and so are running, being in part past, but in their vigor to come, as the vials carry on by steps the casting down of enemies, and bring on the flourishing of the Gospel. I see no great absurdity in this, but some conveniencies; for, 1. It shunneth the mistakes that are in the first opinion, which say, that all is past, wherein many, who truly think that the Scripture seemeth to hold out a better condition to come, cannot acquiesce: this is granted here; for the vials are on the growing hand and these events are coming, which doth confirm the ground laid. 2. It avoideth that absurdity which followeth the other extream, which saith, that all is yet to begin: For, 1. This continueth the Churches condition no longer than the vials do, it being certain that the fourth is almost but begun, (if we be that length) there will be yet even by the reckoning of vials and the events to be fulfilled under them a considerable time to the end, though not necessarily so much as would be, if after six vials these thousand years were to begin. 2. This preventeth the fear of expecting any strange and uncouth events during that time: For, 1. this giveth ground for no more but what suiteth with the vials, and what is otherwise clear in this prophecies, and grounds formerly laid down. 2. If for some years the Churches of Christ have been under this good condition, we may then gather, that no strange thing is to be expected: we may expect a further degree of holiness, number of professours, extent of a Church, &c. But that is not the thing which any will conceive to be dangerous; for if the Church thrive when enemies are brought down, then the more



brought down the more her good condition groweth, and that is necessarily inferred from the series of the vials.

There want not objections from both hands, as, 1. did not Christ and the Saints reign after His death by the Gospel? *Ans.* Yes, and shall do so continually; but the question is about the peculiar reign mentioned in these words. See Chap. 11, 12, and 17.

*Object.* 2. Then the world is yet long to stand, and the Church to have a long good condition. *Ans.* That is not absurd (for we define not how long) but that both follow, is certainly cleared before.

*Object.* 3. from the other hand, The Jews are not yet come in, therefore it cannot be current. *Ans.* The Jews in-coming belongeth not to the Saints good condition simply, but to its height and fulness, which we grant; we take that in before it end, but cannot suspend the Churches good condition until it be, because it is by *Gentile* Churches flourishing condition, that they are to be provoked. Beside, Antichrists height belonged to the Churches low condition, yet is not her low condition of the 1260. days to be restricted in their beginning to his appearing and height, but to his preparatory working, as often it is said.

*Object.* 4. Men cannot think that these are the thousand years they live into. *Ans.* This proceedeth from mistake and prejudice concerning the events; only they believe it not, because they expect some uncouth thing all that time. 2. It cannot be strange to these who say it is past; for, they place as ill and worse times under these thousand years: Nor again, can it be any absurdity to such as are found in the nature of this Kingdom; for, in a great part, we enjoy and have enjoyed in many places since Antichrists begun ruine, in a good measure, all these six things, in which properly this Kingdom consisteth, as, 1. purity; 2. power in saving souls; 3. discipline and visible Church-profession; 4. many Professors in respect of what was before; 5. much peace almost where there is a Church, it hath had for a time, law for its peace, and hath not been persecuted on that account so as formerly; 6. a long continuance of all these, though with other difficulties, such as are not inconsistent with this condition. There are troubles, but they take not away visibility from the Church so as before, and things of this kind are warrantably to be expected from this word, Therefore it is not absurd, to apply it to our time in its beginning.

*Object.* 5. But Satan is loose under the sixth vial, when he stirreth up all to war against the Saints, and Antichrist is not defeated before that. *Ans.* This good condition of the Saints, is not only in their peace, but in their victories; though the devil and the beast fight still, yet they lose ground, Chap. 17. *vers.* 14. and to fight and overcome, is not a great impediment of a good condition; and this is opposed to their former conditions, not in this that they shall not have enemies, but that they shall fight and overcome them, (I mean rightly understood) and it shall not be as it was Chap. 13. 8. 2. The binding of Satan we shew was not absolute, and this sheweth only that he was not kepted from essaying something to be an occasion of Gods praise in the Church, and yet it saith that he was much restrained and weakened, this being the last essay of the beast after many defeats, which also succeedeth not well with him, and is but like Pharaoh's following of Israel to the red Sea, wherein was the Churches victory and not his.

We may then knit the scope (as in the entry, to this 20. Chapter) thus, John being now to shew the devils last overthrow, beginning where it left, Chap. 12, and 13. where he is cast down and for a time rageth and getteth up a new worship in the world by Antichrists means, when open persecution failed him, It might be questioned, what came of him then? It is answered, I saw, saith he, (after he had done much hurt to the Church) the Angel that had cast him from heaven to earth, pursue him there, and take him by this power, and re-

strain him from that dominion and deluding of the world by that beast Antichrist as he had done, and that as strongly for a long time, as if he had been kepted in bonds, during which time I saw that Church, which was by Antichrist persecuted and spoiled, and these Saints that durst not before be seen, brought to a pure, free and peaceable profession of that truth which was formerly born down.

We come now to go particularly through the words (which may be more easily done) according to the former grounds: they contain two notable events, but contemporary, 1. of Satan's binding. 2. of the Saints reigning.

That of Satans binding, hath these circumstances in it. 1. The description of the party that bindeth Satan, *vers.* 1. 2. His executing that errand and actually binding him, *vers.* 2, 3. 3. Some things added for clearing the end of this binding, and that for such a definite time, *vers.* 3.

The party is first called an *Angel*, which we take to be Christ, *Michael*, Chap. 12. 1. Because it is He that destroyeth the work of the devil and is the stronger man, who is still contending with him for His Church. He (Chap. 12.) did cast him down; He (Chap. 6.) did conquer him on His white horse; He (Chap. 19.) defeateth him in his lieutenant the beast, which is a part of the same event. 2. Because it is Christ who carrieth the keys of hell and death, Chap. 1. 18.

2. Again, He is said to *come down from heaven*: this is to distinguish it from that battel in heaven, Chap. 12. where ye heard the devil was cast to the earth; and, as a serpent, poisoned many there; Now, Christ by His power, followeth and putteth a restraint on him in respect of that link he had loosed after his former down-casting.

3. This Angel is described by two things, 1. He *hath the key of the bottomless pit*; this signifieth sovereignty and power: it differeth from that, Chap. 9. 1, 2. For, 1. that was a *star falling down*, not coming down. 2. That was one who got the keys, this hath them as his due place; that but got them for a special use. 3. That opened the pit and sent out locusts and spirits, this shutteth it; and it is like, a respect is had to that loosing in this binding, this here being the restraining of that dominion, which Satan usurped there, and so these thousand years must be reckoned from the shutting of the pit of Antichristian errors, and liberty of His Ministers through, the earth, as that of the opening of the pit sheweth their beginning: and this sheweth, that as Antichrist was gaining ground before the pit was opened, so may he have some being for a long time after the begun shutting thereof.

4. He *hath a great chain in his hand*. The devil is in some chains alway, *Jude v.* 6. under some restraint. This sheweth, 1. the power of the Angel. 2. His errand to link up the devil from his former liberty, as men chain mad dogs. 3. It sheweth the devils malicious nature that must be bound. And, 4. his subordination to Christs sovereignty, who effectually restraineth him.

The executing of his errand followeth, *vers.* 2, and 3. He *laid hold on him* by His power, as one in fury and anger He grippeth him. 2. The party gripped and bound is described, just as Chap. 12. To shew, 1. that it is the same devil that was cast down to the earth that is now further bound. 2. That we may have some help to knit this story of this serpent to the foregoing story of that same party. 3. He *bindeth this serpent*, tieth him up, as it were, and that for a long time, even a *thousand years*. 4. He *casteth him in the bottomless pit*, or abyss, which he feared, that is, put him not only from Magistracy and open persecution, as before, Chap. 12. but also restraineth him from such under-hand dealing as he had before, and discovereth him and his working in a considerable and great degree beyond what was: and he *shutteth him up* and *sealeth it*, as *Dan.* 6. and *Mat.* 26. to shew the certainty of

of that restraint and the superiority of the Angel over him that He shall no more suffer Satan to go by his order and march set to him, than one shut up in prison can go forth either by violence or subtilty.

2. Two ends, or reasons, are set down to clear the Angels proceeding. 1. He is bound that he should deceive the Nations no more, that is, kept from having such influence to delude the world as he had done before, who first made them all heathens and Idolaters generally, then after that made them all (Chap. 13. and 17.) to worship the beast and himself in him, so that there was scarce the face of a visible Church. Now, he shall not get that liberty so universally to delude Nations (for, Nations are collectively to be understood here, all Nations) and eclipse the face of Christs Church as he had done. Nor, 2. ever after that shall he get the world so generally to ignorance, superstition, idolatry, and persecution against the Godly as formerly he had done.

Thus deceiving no more, is not to be understood simply, but with respect to such extent and success, and is here added to signify a new restraint put upon him, beyond what is in his casting to the earth, Chap. 12. where though he was put from open persecution, yet did he follow, and that not without success, a new way by deceit, Chap. 13. but now is he restrained in a great measure from that also; so it is qualified as to the

event. 2. It is qualified as to the time, that is, during the determinate time of his restraint of a thousand years: But after, saith he, he must be loosed a little season; this respecterth what is following concerning Gog and Magog: he was not restrained finally, but for a certain time (it would seem yet indefinite, for if it were just a thousand years, then might one precisely know the time of this event before it come, if they can reckon the beginning of the thousand years) for, saith he, when it expireth, God will give him liberty to exercise his Church (possibly she abusing this good condition, when Antichrist is away, therefore a new scourge is provided) but for a little season. *Little*, 1. compared with the former loosings. 2. *Little*, compared with this time of the Saints peace and good estate. So that when after the Church shall enjoy liberty a long time from Antichrists persecution, a new trial is to be expected to her before the end come. By which also it appeareth, that that reckoning of the thousand years cannot begin at Christs birth, or death; for, then it would not be a *little time* after its expiring to the end (there being yet so many of the vials with their effects to come) and although all the time of the Gospel be called a short time, yet that is not as compared with a definite time, but with eternity; whereas here it is called *little* comparatively with the thousand years going before.

## LECTURE V.

Verf. 4. *And I saw thrones; and they sat upon them, and judgement was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands: and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

5. *But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.*

6. *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*

**T**Hese words contain the second event contemporary with the former, to wit, the good condition of the Saints during that time of Satans binding. What was their estate during these thousand years? I saw saith John, them sit on Thrones, and they lived and reigned a thousand years.

In this we are to consider, 1. the persons whose condition is set forth. 2. The condition it self, 1. generally set out, ver. 4. in the beginning and end thereof. 2. They are described by the condition of the rest of the world opposit to it, ver. 5. 3. It is set out in that wherein their happiness and difference from others consisted, ver. 6.

Although the relative *they* be in the words placed before any antecedent, yet we take *they that sat*, or, were set, on the thrones, not to look to judges, as if they were different from the persons afterward described (as a party complaining, or pleading, are from the Judges) but we take them for one, to wit, they sat on them, or some sat on them, That is, *these that were beheaded for the witness of God, &c.* for, their sitting on thrones, is after expounded by living and reigning.

2. They sit to whom judgement is given, that is, for whom, and in whose behalf, as will after appear. Now they are,

1. *The souls of them that were slain for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God*, that is, (as is cleared before) the successors of these Martyrs who professed the same truth with them, so the witnesses raised, (Chap. 11. are the same with these who were killed, and John is one with Elias, Matth. 11. and 17. It is then Martyrs who suffered for Christ, 1. by heathens. 2. by Antichrist: for, to that end, that is added, *These who had not worshipped the beast*: to shew, 1. that the cause of their Martyrdom, was adhering to Christ, and shunning Antichrist. 2. To shew the time they belong to, to wit, heathen persecution and Antichrists tyranny. 3. They are partakers who neither *worship his image, nor receive his mark*, that is, all who keep themselves free, Chap. 13. and so were by that obnoxious to his persecution (as all such were, *ibid.* ver. 17. all these now, to wit, serious and honest professors of the Gospel, are understood here; for, all such, whether actually Martyrs or not, were comprehended under these descriptions in the Churches low condition, Chap. 13. now they are of the same extent, while he speaketh of the Churches good estate.

The good condition they are made partakers of, is sundry wayes set out, 1. by the preparation made to it, *I saw thrones, &c.* Where three circumstances are, 1. He saw



that is, whereas before, such a thing was not visible, now I saw way made for a good condition to the Church, and thrones (which are an evidence and sign of ruling and sovereignty) set for them; this is not literally to be understood; but metonymically for the thing it signifieth. 2. They sat, or were set on them, that is these Martyrs and confessors, who formerly had scarce a seat to sit on, had now thrones, a good, free and thriving condition; unto which by God they were exalted; as the witnesses in their successors were, *Chap. 11.* 3. Judgement was given them. Judgement is taken sometimes actively, for power and ability to judge, *Psal. 72. 2.* sometimes passively, for a righteous sentence past, *Psal. 94. judgement shall return to righteousness;* sometimes righteousness, or a good cause or innocent person and justice are separated: sometimes God maketh them meet, and justice is upon the side of a good cause or innocent person, and so it is here, that is, these that wanted justice and had none formerly to decide in their favours, now the case is altered, and they get law and mens justice for them, which formerly stood against them, (see *Chap. 13.*) that they might not buy nor sell: Now, (as it were their long lying appeals before God; crying for justice, are called, and sentence passed in their favours, even when they are gone. In which contest, because these Martyrs began it, and its one decision for all; and because men thought the Martyrs had no more a hearing left them, Therefore is the sentence especially, as it were, intimated, and decided in their favours, out of honour and respect to them who were past, and also, to these who were present, as being successors to such and accounted one with them. See, *Job 27. 2.* and *Isaiab 26: 18.* where judgement is taken thus, and by this sitting on the throne they are declared to be so, if otherwise we take judgement, it will be the same that reigning is afterward, or qualifications fitting for reigning, such as are promised to *Solomon, Psal. 72. 2.*

This good condition is set further out in it self, in the end of the verse, as that which followed this preparation, in three things, 1. *They lived,* I take it to be all one with what is said, *ver. 5. To rise again;* for, there this life is called the resurrection, and the dead, their not rising is called they lived not again, *i. e.* in prosperity. Hence these phrases, *Let the King live for ever;* and among heathens, *non est vivere vita, sed valere.* This life includeth, 1. that they enjoyed a spiritual life and had fellowship with God in Christ such as others had not. See *Gal. 2. 20, 21. I live, not I, but Christ liveth in me:* this is included as being opposit to the rest of the dead world. 2. *To live* includeth a comfortable life even in opposition to external discouragements, and dying daily by hazards. *Paul,* in that respect, saith of himself, *1 Corin. 15.* he died daily, and so it is understood, I live, if ye stand fast, I have enough, I am cheerful; this living must be here taken in, as it is opposit to these Martyrs former dying, while yet they lived spiritually, and is opposit to the troubles following, when after the thousand years they cease to live so, which cannot be understood of spiritual or heavenly life only, which is alway the same. 3. *They live* taketh in not only living separately, (and to speak so) individually in some persons (which might have been in the saddest times) but in a Church-estate and a publick combined profession. So the Jews in-coming is called *life from the dead, Rom. 11.* and the Jews restoration, *Ezek. 37. a raising up again of dry bones;* and thus here, their living is opposit to the Churches fleeing formerly, wherein she had not the publick liberty of Ordinances, but was shut up in the temple, *Chap. 11. ver. 2.* 2. By *reigning* is understood but a further degree and qualification of the life mentioned, being opposit to the same three straits, as their life is, especially to the suffering and reproached condition which the Saints and Martyrs formerly had.

Now, when the Church is revived and getteth new life after

such a deadly condition, it not only liveth, but *reigneth*, that is enjoyeth these in a good measure of abundance and freedom in respect of what they had. That as the former is called life from the dead (*Rom. 11.* their present condition being compared with what it was) so this is reigning opposit to slavery, as *Dan. 2.* the Saints are said to have the Kingdom in respect of their freedom under the *Maccabees*, in comparison of their former straits under *Antiochus.*

The third thing is the time, a thousand years: which sheweth that this freedom is to be of a long continuance, at least comparatively with any other time. This is, in sum, the meaning during that time of Satans restraint, the Church had a good free condition in respect of what she formerly had for a long time, so that these, who for their honesty were martyred universally by heathens and Antichrist, are now brought, in Gods providence, to a free profession of the Truth, and some light and shelter provided for them untill this time exple.

From which it appeareth, 1. That these reigning here, are the whole Church and professors of the faith sincerely, and not some few only.

2. That Antichrists height and tyranny must go before the computation of this time, they being such who have suffered by him that are now admitted to reign, and therefore the words cannot bear to be applyed to a suffering condition of the Church outwardly, and a good condition spiritually; for then, it must set out her most difficult strait, wherein most Martyrs suffered under Antichrist; but that cannot be, seeing the first thousand years do not reach that time; or it must set out her condition after that time is past, and that immediately after the turn.

3. It followeth then, that the computation is to begin when the Church getteth a living and being in any good condition and freedom after Antichrists height: For, 1. their killing goeth before. 2. Their living followeth next. Hence are we are to account them living, after the interruption of Antichrists universal kingdom, wherein none were admitted in any part of the world by Law to have life or being, but such as had his mark. See *Chap. 13.* and *11.* which will fall under the vials and begin with them, as is said: for, at their beginning began the Saints to have visible Church-profession allowed them, as *Chap. 11. 11.* for, though at that time Antichrists kingdom hath not a full end (till at least the sixth vial end) yet it cannot be said they live not, nor have a visible Church-profession till that time. So we are to term this beginning at the change of the former time, when the Church and Saints lived not so, even as after *Constantine*, the Church suffered much by heathens here and there, yet still that persecution is brought no further than his time, because there in its height it was interrupted and stopped. Hence also we may gather not only the contemporating of the thousand years with the vials, but of the vials with the seventh trumpet by the same reason: for the thousand years contemporate with the seventh trumpet (as is granted by *Mede*) and therefore with the vials the contemporary of the thousand years, according to the rule, *Que conveniunt uni tertio, inter se conveniunt.* As also, we may gather the succeeding of the vials to the one thousand two hundred and sixty dayes of the Churches flight immediately; for if the Churches condition under the vials be living and visible reigning in part, then then it cannot be fleeing, but supposeth her return, and so must immediately succeed to that, as is formerly said.

4. It must follow from this, that Antichrists beginning must be reckoned sooner than many do, and that that opinion of Papists three years and an half, is but a groundless conceit, and dream, opposit to this word, which supposeth Antichrist to be much sooner in the world.

In their good condition particularly they are said to reign, not simply, but with Christ: which sheweth, 1. He and they reign

reign on earth together, that so when he is interrupted (as it were) as *Chap. 11.* so are they. 2. To shew the nature of their kingdom, that it agreeth with his in time, when he reigneth, so doth it in the things wherein his reigning consisteth; so that in what respects Christ, as Head to his visible Church and King to them, is said visibly and eminently to reign, so are they according to their several relations, He as Head, they as Members, that is, as he reigneth in purity, and power of Ordinances, and multitude of professors and liberty to be worshipped, so do they by partaking jointly of all these in and with Christ. So to reign with Christ, differeth, 1. from reigning simply; 2. from Christs reigning with them, as if he took share with them; No, but he admitteth them to share with him. 3. It differeth from Christs reigning in them, which is merely spiritual and alway continual; this is in an outward enjoying of the Ordinances visible (as fellowship invisible) and a freedom in these, and their reign is more or less, according as Christ is, therefore must necessarily consist in enjoying such things as these by which he reigneth.

2. The good condition of the Church and Saints, *ver. 5.* is set down by the sad condition that all the rest of the world were in, *All that time they lived not again;* and that it might be known what life they lived not again, it is added, *This is the first resurrection,* not the second, which is common both to good and bad, *Dan. 12. 1, 2.*

There are three things in the first part of the verse to be cleared. 1. Who these rest of the dead are, who are opposed to these who lived, *ver. 4.* In a word, it is the successors of these heart enemies and persecutors, who had still a succession of the like in the world. They are all by nature dead that live in the world, *Eph. 2.* but some continue so, *1 Tim. 5.* as the widow that is dead while she liveth; and (*Matth. 8.*) let the dead bury their dead. So here, they are accounted the rest of the dead, even all who are opposed to the successors of the Martyrs, as all contradicting distinguished from the Martyrs who formerly were dead, but now live.

2. It is said they *did not live*, that is, enjoy the former happy condition of the Church, or did not come to that way of persecuting the Church actively as they had done before and were to do after these thousand years. In which tyrannizing over the Church, consisted the life of their predecessors the persecutors, as these, that are Saints now, died in their predecessors their Martyrs; so *contra*, these wicked did live and reign in their predecessors the persecutors, while the Church was martyred, but now are as dead men bound up and restrained from acting that life in a great measure (as if they were not living) and thus it seemeth to consist with their living after the thousand years are past, which is not as if they were converted, but letten loose again to their old exercise; these that were hypocrites before, vent now their enmity more; and wicked men formerly restrained, now aim to bring under again Christs Church.

3. From this we may expound what is said *till the thousand years expire*, as the term of their deadness: for, 1. It is not bodily rising again (for yet the resurrection is not come) nor spiritual rising again; for the number of Saints is rather fewer after this resurrection and the thousand years are past, than now, but as there is a life of grace and of the Saints, so is there a life of corruption and of the wicked and wickedness, which may for a time be restrained. Now, after the thousand years wickedness and wicked men live, that is, do break out in their enmity against the Church to persecute again by *Gog and Magog*, as if personally they were risen, and persecution (that was almost seeming to be dead) is revived. Thus, seeing Satans binding hath a term, and the Saints reign a term, it is suitable also that the death of these wicked men, here understood, have a term also, which can be no otherwise than this. Hence these

three are still observable, 1. Satans losing, the Saints dying, and the persecutors living before the thousand years. 2. Satans blinding, the Saints living and the persecutors dying, during that time (not simply, but in part,) so after the thousand years. Satan is loose again, the Church in hazard again and her good condition interrupted, and so the persecutors they get life and heart again, which is like that healing of the wound, *Chap. 13.* of the head of the beast, not in the same person, but in a successor with the same principles, and the giving life again to the image of the beast, *ver. 13, 14.* and so the Saints their living and dying, will answer well to the persecutors dying and living.

If any object, that these *dead*, are supposed to be dead before the thousand years, *Ans.* Observe for clearing it, his manner of comparison; for the world preceeding that time, is as it were divided in these two, Martyrs and confessors keeping themselves free, and persecutors; both these are spoken of as dead. Again the Church or generation succeeding, during these thousand years are looked upon as the raising again of that former generation: now saith he, The difference between this generation and what went before, shall be so great, that men would think that all the former Martyrs and honest Christians were brought to life again, they shall be so many: but for the persecutors that lived in their times, they shall not appear so as they formerly did during that time, in which respect they are said to be dead, and not to rise, because once they were numerous, and now it is not so; and though this cannot universally as yet be said; yet in this and other Nations, blessed be God, If it be asked, what hath become of former sincere Christians? It may be answered, they are living again in their successors; But if it be asked, what is become of the Pope, and open persecutors that once prevailed here? It may be said, they are dead, and not arisen, but are in their graves, and by Gods blessing, may not that which in so great part is fulfilled in some Nations, be in due time extended to others? and so here, the *rest of the dead*, importeth no more but that they are found in a dead state during these thousand years, and that they do not again recover what they lost by it, till these thousand years were expired: and thus they are rather supposed to be living before it, and interrupted by it, which again they recover in their successors *Gog and Magog*, when it is finished: and this we conceive doth answer the scope.

This is called the first resurrection. It is, 1. applied to spiritual living again, *John 5. 23, &c.* and is supposed to sinful death or death in sin, and so resurrection to glory is distinguished from it. Thus all Saints at all times, rise as they are made to believe, and this is personal, and cannot be secluded here. 2. Resurrection is taken oftentimes as of Churches and Nations, as *Rom. 11.* of the Jews in coming and conversion, and *Ezek. 37.* whenas the Church spreadeth so, as if a Nation were born in one day, *Isaiah 66.* or as if all the former Saints, which were lost as to men, were again, like *Rachels* children, restored, as it is *Jer. 31. ver. 15, 16, &c.* This is after an eclipse, when visibly the Church was decayed almost, and hath again multitudes brought out of that darkness to the profession of the truth formerly obscured. And so we take it here. 1. It is called the first resurrection, in opposition to the general death and darkness over the Church in Antichrists time, which being as a death this may well be called a resurrection. 2. It is called a first, as distinguished from the general resurrection to come, when God shall raise good and bad, *Dan. 12.* and bring them to judgement. These both meet together here; yet it would seem, that seeing he speaketh here of the Church together, as living after the death and darkness she had been in, as if her former honest members were arisen; it is most agreeable to the scope, to take in especially the out-breaking of a general profession of truth by Saints in a visible Church-state, yet so as including the former, Therefore



is not called *living* simply in respect of the second death, following, but *living* again, or *rising*, in respect of what is past, and the first resurrection, as being compared with that resurrection coming. Hence it is, that this first resurrection is the same here with *living* formerly mentioned, and opposed to the death that the rest of men lye still in; and therefore is contemporary with, and peculiar unto, these thousand years, it being one of the expressions which summeth up the Saints good condition during that time. This, saith he, is the *first resurrection*, that is, this *living*, &c.

In the sixth Verse, he subjoyneth two things to this, 1. the qualification in general of these who shall be partakers of this great privilege of the *first resurrection*. 2. The advantages and prerogatives that follow it. Both which will confirm, that by this resurrection is understood the Churches good condition, outward and inward sincere reality of grace in all the parts of it. Their advantages in general, (which is all one with their qualifications) are two, 1. *They are, or, he is, blessed*: that comprehendeth all, he is a happy man who shall share of this condition and shall believe in Christ. *Obj.* But (may it be said) are not all happy who ever believed, why is it so said now especially? *Ans.* So are all that ever die in Christ, yet is there a peculiar blessednesse that belongeth to some time, as *Chap. 14. 13.* so it is in blessednesse here now in this time. It hath to believers more clearnesse, more light, liberty and publick profession of the Gospel, and that with fewer temptations and straits generally than at other times before and after; it is a good time to fall in, and happy is he who shall have his lot in it, as *Chap. 19.* blessed are they that are called to the supper of the Lamb, *ut supra.*

The second qualification will clear this, *And holy is he*: that doth hold forth in general, an abounding in holinesse during this time, when the *Jews* shall be provoked to jealousy, seeing here this is the scope. Think not that all who shall profess during this time, are partakers of this resurrection; No, that is a singularly happy man and blessed, and a singularly holy man, he must be, and he shall be, so qualified and fitted for it, in more holinesse than ordinary. This is not as if all Saints then on earth, were more holy than others that were before that time, or shall follow after; but that, in general, holinesse shall at that time be more rise in the Church; and therefore, that reigning of all Saints must not be so understood, as if all individually should flourish in the world, but that generally their condition should be better then formerly. Or, take these words generally, to shew the effects of that resurrection, or what they are the better that partake of it (for, both may be) they are blessed singularly and holy: which sheweth, 1. wherein their blessednesse especially consisteth, to wit, in holinesse, that is their happinesse, which is more than any outward liberty to deborde. If it be asked, what singular thing of holinesse is spoken of in that time? *Ans.* The degree, it is like, will be more eminent; 2. the extent more universal; and, 3. it will be much now when hypocrites abound (as alwayes they do when Religion is in request) to be holy then, hypocrisy and prosperity being greater enemies to grace than open profanity and persecution: But he that partaketh of this resurrection, he is both happy and holy together.

The advantages more particularly are exprest, and they are three in number. The first is negatively exprest, *on such the*

*second death shall have no power.* This *second death* was spoken of, *Chap. 2.* and it followeth, *Chap. 21. 8.* In a word, it is to be casten in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, that is, hell. If any say, so we here make three deaths or four. 1. Spiritual. 2. Natural or temporal death, which cometh on all. 3. Eternal death. And, 4. We have spoken of a general death or deadnesse in respect of the defections of Churches. *Ans.* Look to every death, and put it with its own contradicting member, and there will be but two, as, 1. a spiritual death of the soul in sin; and, 2. of wrath in hell. Again, a temporal death of the body common to all; and, 2. an eternal death of soul and body, that is the second here. 3. There is a general deadnesse in the Churches great eclipsing under Antichrist, and the womans fleeing, and the witnesses killing; and there is a second death foregaint that of the general passing of the sentence against all the wicked together. However, these that are partakers of this resurrection, they cannot partake of any of these. Hence it appeareth, 1. what their prerogative is; it is freedom from hell, they even then are not alway kept from the first death, but from the second death. 2. It sheweth it is not a bodily resurrection here (for many such are not necessarily kept from hell) but spiritual in faith and holinesse with fruits.

The second advantage is, *they shall be priests of God, and of Christ*: that was (*Chap. 5.*) *Priests to God*, here it is of *God*. I conceive the scope is the same, to shew their advancement to serve and worship God, as Priests in a familiar way. Or, it may be *Priests of God*, excellent Priests, as trees of God, harps of God, &c. when any thing is excellent, so it is called. However, the words imply, 1. that is a great privilege to get God worshipped and to be true worshippers, as it was to be high Priest. 2. That Believers are eminently admitted to this freedom at this time by this resurrection: for, 1. there are two sorts of sacrifices, one proper to the Law; and another, common to the Gospel, *Mal. 1.* pure offerings, a contrite heart, &c. So there are two sorts of Priests, one by office, that is gone, there being now no proper material sacrifice; and that is not meant here, this privilege being applicable to women and children who are not capable of that office. 2. Another improperly, in respect of free and full admission to spiritual sacrifices to Him, without the intervention of any high Priest but Jesus Christ, which may be in opposition to the plurality of mediators and intercessors formerly had recourse to. If any object, that these are common privileges to all Believers at all times, *Rev. 1. ver. 6.* and *Chap. 5. 10.* *Ans.* So is reigning with him. See *Chap. 5. ver. 10.* where Priests and Kings are together. By which it appeareth, that these dayes bring no new thing in kind, but in degree. These shall be eminently under that time, and more frequent in the Church, and have more to partake of them than formerly.

The third, (which is before) *they shall reign with him a thousand years*, so as *ver. 4.* and is in place of what is said, *Chap. 5. 10.* *They shall be priests to God, and Kings*; which confirmeth the answer formerly given, and must be understood as it agreeth with all Believers; for, all of them are Kings and Priests, which sheweth it to be spiritual; and if Priests here be parallel to that, *Chap. 5.* why not to reign also, only allowing to the Church in general a more eminent degree of this life and reign?

## LECTURE VI.

- Verf. 7. *And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,*  
 8. *And shall go out to deceive the nations, which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battell: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.*  
 9. *And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the Saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.*  
 10. *And the devil that deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night, for ever and ever.*

**W**E have heard the first two contemporary events, to wit, Satan's binding, the Saints living and the worlds lying still in death: now followeth the little loose that was foretold to be given to Satan after these thousand years expire; when for a time their case is turned, the devil is loosed, the wicked fall again to their former practice of persecution, and the Saints are straitened: yet thus it is qualified; 1. It is for a short time. 2. It is not an universal overturning and laying waft all as formerly, but encompassing, and, as it were, a besieging and putting to a pinch. 3. A glorious and immediate delivery, God raising the siege Himself.

This event is set out in these steps, 1. Satans loosing, and the time when it shall be, it is, *after the thousand years expire*, verf. 7. 2. There is his design and enterprise to stir up Nations against the Church, that hath had long quietness, and now possibly have fallen secure under it, *verf. 8.* 3. His successe, he getteth them together in a great number, and they proceed to encompass the holy city, *verf. 9.* 4. There is the event and result of this tragedy as to them, and comedy as to the people of God, the deliverance of the one, and overthrow of the other, and that in two steps, 1. temporal, *verf. 9.* the second, eternal, *verf. 10.* The Dragon is cast into the lake to be tormented for ever, There being after that no liberty given him to mar the peace of the Church of Christ, which sheweth this must be near the end.

This loosing of Satan out of prison, must be in reference to his former binding, (*& contra*) that as he was restrained from engaging the Nations in such open and universal hostility against the Church as had been, Now his loosing must be the giving of him some link loose, to be able to bring more of that about than during the time of his restraint, as appeareth in the two verses following. 1. In that he *went out to deceive*, and more vigorously set about it. 2. In that he did it more successfully than formerly, yet not without a link upon him; so that his binding is not absolute before, more than his loosing is now, but comparatively. Secondly, Consider the time when he getteth this liberty, and so of all this event that is foretold. 1. It is clear after the thousand years expire, and therefore it is yet to come, much of the thousand years being to passe, for which cause we may be, yea must be, the more general in the events themselves. 2. We may say, it is not a long time, but, as was said, a little space, *verf. 3.* comparatively to his former loosing, and the Church intervening tranquillity; so this fury of the devil will not be so long as former outbreakings, and he is soon taken by the Lord, even, as it were, after rendezvousing, when they are thinking to carrie all before them; but how long it is, cannot be determined, the Lord having kepted it in His own hand and power. 3. This

certainly falleth within the seventh vial, seeing it comprehendeth the Dragons overthrow, who overlied the beast, the object both here (*verf. 10.*) and there, being the devils kingdom, and that after the beasts overthrow. The end following both, and phrases relating to both, will clear it: we take it to belong to the latter part of the seventh vial, the Churches good condition probably after the sixth expired, and the seventh begun, being at its height: even then Satan is let loose, and when he cometh to a height again, he is taken, and the vial, with hailstones from heaven, (*as chap. 16.*) cometh upon Gog and Magog, as *Ezek. 38. and 39.* and with fire also, as here. Fourthly, (Which cleareth both the former) this is not long before the day of judgement; for, it is Satans last loose: thereafter he is in the lake, not for a thousand years, but for ever; which saith there is no more to do with him on earth, and the judgement also is reserved for him till the last day. Beside, it being the explication of the seventh vial, the judgement cannot be long after. And therefore, in order of matter, (as well as of words) it is subjoyned, and so to be understood. It is therefore probably the last event preceeding the day of judgement though there may be some interval after this of Gog, as there was betwixt that Gog (*Ezek. 39.*) and Christs first coming; but long it cannot be, so much of the vial being spent before it come to this.

If it be said, This seemeth not consistent with what is said of the worlds security when Christ shall come again, if now there be such troubles. *Ans.* Christs speech, (*Mat. 24.*) holdeth forth security in the profane world as was in the old, opposit to Noah: And these two agree well to the condition of the wicked, proud, profane world: beside, trials being ordinary, and battels not so strange, it may possibly be little taken notice of by many of the Church, especially if any interval be, or help be given to contest with these enemies, men may be more taken up with the one, than the other; yet that peace is best applied to the world, and, it may be, this event of Gog, is even unexpected to the Church.

The devils improving this liberty (for he is not long quiet afterward,) is set down, *verf. 8.* And it is, 1. set down generally, *he shall go out*, that is, with more vehement onsets and temptations, to deceive the nations, that is, to bring them against Christ and His Church, as if they might prevail over them, or as if there were some advantage to be gotten by bearing them down, or by some such thing to engage them to battle against the Saints, wherein is the greatest beguiling of the world. These Nations are said to be in the four quarters of the earth, 1. for their number, 2. for the universality of this uproar and rage that shall be on all hands, and from all quarters, raised up against the Church, who shall be as a City besieged by them.



More particularly they are described whom he deceiveth, *Gog and Magog*. By some *Gog* is expounded *secret*, from the Hebrew *G A G sctum*; *Magog*, *open*, from the Hebrew word *M I G A G a tecto*, and so taketh in secret and open enemies: of which I shall say nothing: Only it cannot be applied to the Pope or Turk, these being enemies to arise after the thousand years expire; who have a conjunct interest in fighting against the Church, and that upon an Ecclesiastick account, which the Turks profess not, their power withal most probably being before this broken. It seemeth respect is had, 1. to *Magog*, whose posterity is spoken of, *Gen. 10. 3.* of whom, as *Jesephus*, *cap. 6. 7.* *Ant. Jud.* and others with him, write that the *Scythae* are come, and by these are meant barbarous nations at a distance brought upon the Church while she hath peace in herself: for, their encompassing seemeth to hold forth an external force and violence from without. 2. It relateth and alludeth especially to that *gog & Magog* in *Ezek. 38. 39.* where, as the hurt the Jews got after their peace and return from *Babylon*, was by these; and as that stir was bitter, but short by *Antiochus*, & the last before Christs first coming; So in allusion to that, these are the Churches last enemies, setting upon her after her deliverance from mystical *Babylons* tyranny; So these last enemies that trouble the Churches peace, after her restoring from spiritual *Babylon*, before Christs second coming, are called *Gog and Magog*, even as there is an allusion in the names and titles, that all the enemies of the Church of the Gospel get, unto the names of the Churches enemies under the Law: for, both had three great and especial enemies, 1. of old *Egypt*, who oppressed the Church of the Jews in her infancy; in allusion to that, the heathen Emperour, the Churches fifth enemy (*Chap. 12.*) is called a dragon, as *Pharaoh* was, *Psal. 74.* and *Ezek. 27.* See *Chap. 12.* 2. Their next great oppressing enemy was *Babylon*, that led them and kept them long time captive, answerable to this Antichrists captivity, is frequently compared to *Babylons* in this Book. The third enemy the Jews had after they had gotten a little peace at home, was the *Lagide* and *Selucidæ*, especially under *Antiochus Epiphanes*. These by *Ezekiel* (*chap. 38. and 39.*) are called *Gog and Magog*: Answerable to this are these enemies here called so; partly, because they follow the peace and outgate the Church hath after her delivery from mystical *Babylon*; partly, as being of the like nature, cruel, violent, &c. yet soon restrained, so that they never come to vent and execute their malice against the Church as former enemies did; partly, because they go immediately before Christs second coming, as these did, as the last enemies before His first coming. And this we think the safest reason of these names *Gog and Magog*, without enquiring for any further mysterie in them. More particularly, the end of his gathering them, is set down, *to battel*: he mindeth it against the Church, but God turneth the battel against them: I take it not for one singular battel, but to war against, to oppress and persecute the Church openly and avowedly.

Lastly, their number is expressed to be exceeding great, even as the sand of the sea, alluding to some places where that expression is used, *Judg. 7. 12.* 2 *Sam. 17. 11.* Whereby it appeareth, 1. what number of wicked are in the world, even in the Churches best time. 2. That if they were not restrained, the Church in her best estate would be little in comparison of them. 3. That they want but a loosing, and soon are stirred, as afterward followeth.

The success followeth in two steps, *ver. 9.* First, he prevailed so with them that they went up on the breadth of the earth. Not only used he endeavours, but many were engaged, and almost the face of the earth was covered with them, they were so many. 2. They come so far without resistance, that they compass the camp of the Saints about, and the beloved City. By the camp of the Saints, and the beloved City, are meant one

thing, to wit, the visible Church. It is called (*chap. 11. ver. 2.*) the holy City. Then here a Camp and a City, to shew it was not so to be trod on, but encompassed, the strait is not so great now as then, *Chap. 11.* only, before, it was in freedom, now it is beset as a besieged City round about. She is called the Camp of the Saints, 1. In allusion to *Israels* marching in the wilderness, to shew that the visible Church is on her way and march like an Army. 2. In allusion to wars, wherein the weaker kept themselves within fortified Camps, and the enemies encompassing, is as setting on them (as it were) in their fortifications, when they have all the field at their command. And this suiteth with the scope here, where the Church is brought to that strait as a little Army intrenched are, when a greater lyeth down round about them, as *Isa. 1. ver. 8.* They are called the beloved City, 1. In allusion to *Jerusalem* which was so called, the Saints being a spiritual City and Incorporation in a Church-estate to God. 2. To shew their strait also, that not only in the fields was the Camp besieged (which was a great strait) but at home their chief City, as it was in *Hezekiah's* time, when no other place almost but *Jerusalem* was free, and it besieged also.

4. The event followeth, *ver. 9.* shewing what came of this. 1. A temporal overthrow on the devils instruments, fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. It alludeth to that terrible destruction of *Sodom*, *Gen. 19.* or, to that delivery of *Jerusalem*, which God wrought by sending an Angel from heaven to destroy *Sennacherib's* Army, *Isa. 37.* when *Jerusalem* was straitly besieged; but especially to that of *Gog and Magog*, *Ezek. 38. and 39.* whom God is said to destroy from heaven with fire, as it is expressed in the Prophets words; It is, upon the matter, all one with that of hailstones, *Chap. 16.* under the seventh vial, that being an other mean used in *Gog's* destruction with this mentioned here. It saith, it will be terrible and unexpected, and that wherein Gods hand will immediately and eminently appear beyond (if not without) all humane appearance and means. And though the words expressing the judgement, be borrowed (as *Johns* manner is) from *Ezekiel*, as also the names *Gog and Magog*; yet do they not necessarily tend both to one scope.

The temporal judgement on the instruments of this trouble, is past: followeth now the eternal judgement on the head, the devil, spoken of, *ver. 10.* he is taken and cast into the pit: and although he ranged a while after the beast, yet both meet together now. This judgement is set out, first, by describing the party judged. It is, the devil, that deceived these Nations: whereby it appeareth, 1. that it is the devil himself, the old Serpent, that is bound here, it being he who especially deceiveth the Nations and draweth them to enmity against the Saints and Church. 2. That his deceiving (though he be principal) keepeth not off wrath from these that are deceived by him, but the judgement often first lighteth on them. 3. It sheweth, that all the great projects that the devil putteth the men of the world unto, the furthest length and success they have, it proveth still deceit to them. 4. That the Devils restless deceiving of others, turneth to his own judgement in the end; and his deceiving is marked as an eminent aggravation of his guilt, that seeing these who were deceived, suffered justly, much more he who did deceive them.

2. This judgement is set out, in shewing its nature what it was, or, where it was, he was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, that is, hell, *ver. 14.* compared unto a great lake that is continually boiling with fire and brimstone for its horribleness and painfulness, that being one of the terriblest tortures we can imagine, it is in such a torment he is cast; a fire for torment, and a lake for abundance. Concerning which it may be asked, Is not the devil casten at first to hell when he fell? Answer. From *Jude*, it is clear he is condemned to it: Yet, 2. it is clear

clear from the Gospel, that the actual and final shutting him and them up, (for there are many devils) is suspended till the end come. Therefore are these words, *Art thou come to torment us before the time?* Matth. 8. 11. And *Jude ver. 6. They are kept in chains, &c.* Also in Gods justice he having a link loose to deceive the wicked world, and some times to exercise his own people till the end come; Now, he is actually condemned to that place and pain. Schoolmen say he hath three judgements, 1. When he was cast from heaven. 2. In Christs death. 3. At the day of judgement, when not only the prince of the world is judged by the Gospel, but punished finally.

2. It may be asked, where it is, (for, that there is such a place, it is clear,) If beneath in the center of the earth, if in the air, or beyond, or without the world; *Answ.* This needeth not much be debated, it is, and was of old prepared for the devil and his angels, and that it is down and beneath, as to the place of the glorified Saints (it is probable) seeing the Scripture speaketh ever so of it; And that example of *Korab, Dathan and Abiram*s destruction, (*Numb. 16.*) seemeth pregnant. It is certainly a most horrible place, fitted with darkness and torment for the declaring of Gods justice: this being the devils dwelling, folks would be loath to dwell with him.

3. They ask, whether any material fire be there or not, really to burn? *Answ.* Certainly there is a great pain there, even the greatest, as we account of fire; yet certainly, seeing it is souls especially that are tormented there, and it is such a fire as the devil is tormented with, who is a spirit, it must therefore be a fire of far other natural vehemency and penetrancy than ours is, which now we make use of, it being kindled by Gods wrath without and within for such an end, if any such material fire be, which may also more directly affect bodies.

3. This place, or judgement, is set out by its companions, or former indwellers, It is the lake, *Chap. 19. where the beast and false prophet were cast*, and where now they are; the devil, whose judgement was a little suspended, is now sent after them. And this we conceive is added, 1. To shew that this part is the continuation of what remained in that, *Chap. 19.*

of the devils last judging. 2. To point out a joint partaking of the beast and the devil, the superiour agent, in judgement, even in the same judgement. 3. That this event of the devils casting in the lake, is posterior to the beasts destruction, which must be, seeing the beast is there before him; which maketh some, who plead for Antichrists standing till Christs second coming, find a necessity here to make the devils judging posterior to his. Neither can the supplying of any word alter it (which some would be at, to evite this) as *where the beast was to be seen, or was to be cast.* For, 1. It is ordinary, even in the verses before, to omit in the original the substantive (*est, is, are, or, were*) but not so in other words. 2. The scope here, is to shew, that it was the same with the beasts judgement preceeding, and therefore relateth to it, as a thing going before indeed; and not only so expressed in words, seeing the events are different; and this is declared or explained by that, *Chap. 16.* Therefore that must be clearer than the other, and so before it in time; Especially here, seeing the scope is to shew, that now the devil, as the last enemy, is put down, and shareth with those that went before.

4. The judgement is set out in three, 1. It is *torment*, horrible pain that affecteth even the devils. 2. It is without intermission, *night and day*: there is no nights ease, not a drop of cold water there. 3. It is eternal, it is *for ever and ever*, it never endeth, even after thousands of years are expired; when millions of years are by, it is but beginning. Hence appeareth; 1. the falshood of the errors of those who say, that length of time shall end wrath, and that devils and reprobates after a long time will be relieved, which was *Origen*s opinion. 2. See hence the benefit of the first resurrection now, and aim at it to be kepted from this death. All this concerning Sarans last judgement may, by anticipation, be set down now for continuation of the story of that event. It is indeed after the last judgement, when Saints shall judge Angels, *1 Cor. 6.* Hell is a cruel place even to devils: well are they that are freed from it, and never know it in experience. If it were believed, men would rather put their head in the fire than sin.

## LECTURE VII.

Verf. 11. *And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them.*

12. *And I saw the dead small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

13. *And the sea gave up the dead which were in it: and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.*

14. *And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire: this is the second death.*

15. *And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire.*

**W**E have hitherto had a view of the state of the visible Church to the close of its warfare so long as it shall be militant, till her great and last enemy the devil, shall be taken and shut up in his everlasting prison, which was hinted at in the former verse. Now, unto the end, followeth a most plain description of the day of judgement, when all good and bad that ever lived, shall be raised, and brought to appear before their great Judge to receive sentence

every one according to their works. The state of the wicked, (because it is most shortly insisted on) is, in the first place, set down in this Chapter. Then the state of the godly and their happiness, is more fully insisted on in the two Chapters following. So, in short, the state of the Church seemeth to be, 1. Spreading under the first seal, as to the thriving of the Gospel. 2. Persecuted under the second, third, fourth and fifth seals. 3. Delivered temporally by the sixth. All this is *Ch. 6.*



This is the first period. 2. Then beginneth Satan to work under-hand till he bring Antichrist to an height, and by the *Turks* over-run a great part of these that carry the name of Christians; that is under the first six trumpets, with the prophecies contemporary with these. 3. By the seventh trumpet and first vial, judgement beginneth on Antichrist; the case turneth and is carried on during the vials and the thousand years, wherein Babylon is destroyed, to wit, *Rome* by the fifth vial, the Pope fleeing from it to new help; and the *Turks* are destroyed by the sixth; *Gog* and *Magog* are letten loose and stirred up by the devil under the seventh, whereby they temporally, and after some little interval, he eternally, and all the wicked, are judged by the judgement of the great day: which was, as to him, hinted before (that the story of his ruine might be together) but here more fully set down.

That this describeth the last judgement, is almost past controversy, even amongst these who apply the Chapters following to a state of the militant Church, and it is clear not only by the native context and series, which is not to be interrupted, especially where the things do so well agree: for, having spoken of the devils last judgement, which by *Jude* is called the judgement of the great day, it is consentaneous therefore to understand this of such a judgement whereby he is so judged. Beside, being now at the close of the seventh vial, which bringeth the end, and the expressions and judgement, both in the verse before and following, jumping with these of the seventh vial, such a judgement as closeth that vial must be understood, which can be no other but the last; But the expressions are full, and the matter and circumstances so convincing, that they leave no place of doubting, being so like *Dan. 12. 1.* and other places, where the day of judgement is spoken of: for, at what other judgement are all the *dead* judged, all the reprobate sent to hell, the Elect delivered, death and hell cast in the lake, &c. which are all expressed here, to what other judgement can they agree, but to the last, whereof they are particular properties? as in the explication it will appear.

This judgement is notably described in these four; 1. In the preparation for it. 2. The parties. 3. The manner of accurate proceeding, and the sentence. 4. The execution thereof, as to the wicked here, and as to the godly, *Chap. 21.* and 22. Let your ears hear of, and your eyes behold, this judgement, as that before which every one of you will, before long appear, and so frame your selves to be suitable to it, as if with *John* you saw this great Court fenced, this Judgement set, and the Sentence pronounced, the like whereof never was, nor shall be.

There are four things in the preparation, *A great white throne, and one sat on it.* This maketh way for what followeth, that we may know that it is a great thing that is meant here, it alludeth to *Dan. 7.* There is a throne, to signifie majesty, glory and stateliness as well as Authority; for when this Judge cometh, He shall come in power and great glory, as in the glory of his Father, and with all the holy Angels, with the sound of the Arch-angel in the clouds, &c. all sheweth that never was there such a glorious Parliament holden nor ridden, or so royal a throne set.

It is called, Secondly, *white*, as He was on a white horse, because of purity, and holiness; judgement and justice are the habitation of his throne, *Psal. 89.* and righteousness goeth before His face: there is no wrong nor injustice there; as also for its shining gloriousness, its power and majesty is infinitely pure, spotless and incomprehensibly glorious.

It is called a *great white throne*, for the same reasons: The thrones of the Kings of the earth, even *Solomons* golden throne, are but petty, not to be accounted footstools to this; when this is set, these will vanish; He that sitteth on this is a great King, and a great God above all gods.

The second thing in the preparation, is, that *one sat on his throne*; he saw him that sat on it: it was not empty, but one was on it, whom he saw; he nameth Him not, possibly, because he had no name every way suitable to Him: for His name is (*Chap. 19.*) such as none knoweth, but Himself; or, because it is without all controversy who this Judge is, an article of Faith to Believers, the Son of man who shall come in power and great glory from the Fathers right hand to judge both the quick and the dead, He is called (*ver. 12.*) *God*, before whom they stand; to shew that this Judge is so, and then will appear to be so, Howbeit, as man, visibly he will here proceed, and shall be seen by all, even by these who pierced Him: they shall behold Him coming in this glory. See, *Mat. 25. 1 Thes. 4. Rev. 1. 7.*

The third thing preparatory, or going before is, *before*, or from whose face, the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. This is the great consummation, and the universal change that shall be on all things, when the fashion of this world shall be changed, and it shall depart like a scroll, and the elements melt with fervent heat: What this is, may be spoken to, *Chap. 21. ver. 1.* But certainly here is such a change as was not before this time, even that spoken of under the seventh vial, *Chap. 16.* that heaven and earth shall flee away as not to be found, that is, not so as formerly they were, there being now a change on them.

They are said to flee before his face, to shew with what facility and ease that change shall be wrought. 2. Of what glorious majesty and power this great Judge shall be, that these creatures cannot abide His presence but do flee. 3. To shew that it is the end, because this consummation, and great change on the Creation is instantly before the Judgement, when the living Elect shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, as *1 Cor. 15.* and *1 Thess. 4.* now time and place (as we make use of them) are gone.

The fourth step of this preparation, is the raising of all parties to be judged: which includeth the resurrection in two steps, 1. that all are again brought to a bodily life, where ever their bodies were buried or destroyed. And here we take in the change that shall befall these, who shall be living, in stead of their dying. The second step is their appearing before the Judgement: for, where the carcass is, there will the Eagles be gathered together. Hence it is said, that the Son will send out His Angels to gather them from the four winds, and Jesus the Judge shall have them personally presented before Him; which also in part belongeth to the procedure. This is the order of the matter, though this of the Resurrection be subjoyned after the procedure in judgement, *ver. 13.*

The second thing cleared in this judgement, is the parties, who is the Judge; and, 2. who are judged. The Judge certainly is Jesus Christ the Mediator, who hath the keys of hell and death, *Chap. 1. 18.* and is appointed Judge of quick and dead, *Akt. 17. 30, 31.* called *God*; *ver. 12.* before whom all do appear: (for, He is personally to be understood) having these divine Attributes of power to execute, omniscience to take up, and justice to proceed: He hath divine Authority and Commission for this; He hath divine glory, and will appear to be God in our nature in that day, going about this last and solemn act of His Mediatory service and kingdom.

The parties judged, who stand before the throne, are, 1. generally the *dead*, all who ever lived, as after, *ver. 12.* Under which are comprehended these who then shall be alive, (as also *Enoch* and *Elias*.) 1. because their change shall be as death to them, in changing their bodies to an immortal condition. 2. Because they are few and comprehended under the greatest number; for, if the dead appear, much more these who shall be living.

More particularly, they are distributed in *small and great*; which

which taketh in all sorts, 1. Kings and mean ones; none shall escape. 2. Rich and poor. 3. Mighty, powerful, strong and weak. 4. Old, at the greatest age and stature, and young, who have not attained to their perfection. In a word, all that ever breathed and had life, none are exempted but all are made to appear.

If any ask, what young ones have to be judged for? *Ans.* They are under one of the Covenants either of Works or Grace; if of Works, then have they the breach of that Covenant to count for, they being the serpentine brood of a transgressing stock. 2. If they are elect, they are to be judged by the Book of life.

For that question agitated, In what pitch every one appeareth, whether of a lower or taller state, old or young; according as they died? we insist not on it. The Schoolmen decide all to be raised about the age of thirty years, that being the prime of mans strength, and about the age that Christ was at when he suffered, which will be found to be thirty three years, and some more, having entered to his publick Ministry in the thirty; but this derogateth from the mystery of the Resurrection, 1 *Cor.* 15. for though the same body be raised, yet it will be another kind of body than ever formerly it was at any age. We may say of the Elect, they shall be perfect, in whatever condition they died (all that which is imperfect being done away) their person, stature, judgement, &c. being perfected. And we think that that perfection which consisteth in conforming them to Christs glorious Body, is of another kind than to respect either age, stature, or the like. We may see from this also, the absurdity of that Popish conceit, whereby the judged are distinguished in four sorts by the Schoolmen, one whereof, doth judge, and is not judged, being of a degree of perfection beyond coming into judgement: here none that hath life, whether Elect or Reprobate, are secluded, but all being in these Books, all that are written in them must appear, and none there are but they are written in them: and no need there were of this Book of life, if the Elect in it were not also to be judged; it is true, Believers, none of them shall come to judgement, as judgement importeth condemnation according to the Word, *John* 3. 18. so no Elect cometh into judgement, yet for absolution they come. It is truth also, that the Saints shall then judge, even Angels, 1 *Corinth.* ver. 6. and possibly the Apostles and some others may be more eminent in that judgement, *Matth.* 19. 28. yet that doth not exclude them from being judged themselves (they being among the dead, now standing before the throne) but includeth an assessor's assent to the great judge his sentences, and is a special prerogative put on all Believers that day, who shall be caught up on the bench with the Judge, when the reprobate, like fellows and pannelled malefactors, shall be standing at the bar, while they sit (as it were) on the steps of the sides of his throne, being caught up to him, when others are left, 1 *Thess.* 4. which also may admit of degrees.

Followeth now the proceeding, when God is on his throne, and all the world standing before him: it hath three steps. 1. generally, Books are opened for all. 2. A special Book for the Elect. 3. The Book of life is opened. 3. Sentence is passed and pronounced upon all according as was found in these books, and according to their works. In all which there is an allusion to mens proceeding: where, when men are guilty and brought to judgement, 1. Their libels are read, called by the Hebrews, books, *Job.* 31. 35. 2. The witnesses depone; or their depositions, already on record, are made known. 3. The Law is consulted, concerning the matters that are found, what sentence is due to them, so it is here: which is not as if Jesus Christ were literally so to proceed, (for nothing escapeth him) but to shew that the judgement shall be as accurate and particular in the trial, and just in the close, as if all were registered and put on record: nothing shall be missed or mistaken in

its circumstances, but things shall be so just in themselves and so manifested and put beyond all doubt to others, as if an exact register of them had been kept and now published. In all which, allusion is to *Dan.* 7. though this Book of life is not mentioned there, because it is but a temporal judgment that is principally intended in that place.

Let us enquire, 1. what these books are? 2. What this is to open them, they are certainly expressed so with respect to mens Courts. And therefore we take the first to hold out, 1. That there is a book of challenges and accusations, wherein and whereby all that ever men did, is manifested and brought to their mind; so *Job* 31. 35. This may be a record of events in the Lords omniscience, and in the memory and consciences of men, wherein every thing past is made fresh to them; so is there a Book of remembrance (a book containing, as it were a diary of all their lives) *Mal.* 3. 16. 2. There is a witness, a book of the creatures without, who have been abused; and from within, the conscience, as it now seeth, it excuseth or accuseth, *Rom.* 2. 14. and so is a law and evidence sufficient to the man. Thus the matter of fact is made out, ye did thus and thus with such and such aggravations, the conscience cannot refuse it. 3. The book of the Law is produced, whereby actions are examined, whether conform or disconform unto it. And so Christ saith (*Joh.* 12.) the word that he speaketh shall judge them in the great day, These are the books; for these Books in general are in the plural number, because they are more than one, whereas there is but one book of life: the reason is, 1. Because Grace, arising and flowing from free election, hath but one way to all comprehended in it; but justice, in its dealing with others, taketh notice of their several actions and guilt. 2. Election considereth men without any thing in themselves or respect to the Law, and is no act of justice but of sovereign Grace. Again justice considereth men as such, and therefore enquireth in their carriage, looketh to proofs, and compareth all with the Law, which maketh that judicial process to be more exactly set out by several books.

These books are opened, in comparison of what they were before, to wit, sealed, neither was it known what was in them. Now, 1. all actions and events, mercies or rods, less and more are made manifest, even that which was most secret, idle words, *Matth.* 12. every secret thing, good or bad, *Eccles.* 12. last ver. 2. As nothing is forgotten, so every thing is known as it is, the spiritual meaning of the Law, and so the deserving of sin, and all the aggravations of it are better known, many truths and threatnings believed then, that were dallied with before. The 1. is necessary to perfect the challenge and libell; the second is necessary, to make all assent to Gods justice, and know their own deserving which could not be if they understood not the Law. By the one, many sins will occur, whereof they never dreamed: by the other, the least sins will have huge aggravations beyond what they appeared. 3. The conscience-book will be opened, when blindness is taken away from the sight, and judgement and hardness and deadness from the conscience; so that these who looked but on sin before, are now affected and pricked with it, and the conscience becometh restless and sensible: not only bearing witness to the truth of such things convincingly, but also with inward pangs, accusing such things now, and sentencing for them, whereas it formerly slept under them, as *Psal.* 51. They are now ever before them, yea within them, thus all is cleared. By which we may see, 1. That nothing will be missed in that day, Gods Register is so exact. 2. That what is secret now, will be revealed then, not only to the parties own conscience (for which end every one will have their own distinct books) but even to others, because they also must know and assent to Gods justice in general why such a one is condemned, &c. which cannot so well be without the knowledge of their guilt. Beside, this is aimed



at by this day, to make Gods justice manifest; therefore is it called the revelation of Gods righteous judgement, *Rom. 2.* Hence it is said, that nothing is hid, which shall not be discovered, even as to others, before men and angels: yea in that place (*Matth. 25.*) the reason of the sentence respectively is given. Neither doth the manifestation of these deeds prove derogatory to the Elects joy, nor that capacity of knowledge useful to the Reprobate: For, 1. that manifestation glorifieth God, it being manifested as the ground upon which grace is glorified, and so wrongeth them no more than these known sins of *Solomon, Saul, or Paul, &c.* which are not for their infamy remembered then. 2. Their Repentance and Faith in Christ with the pardon and glory that Christ putteth on them, is also manifested; so that this is furthered by the other, and not lessened by it: and that knowledge in Reprobates tendereth more to the aggreging of their horror and pain when they see others (possibly alike in some things guilty) admitted to glory, and themselves shut out; when they see the causes of Gods proceeding, the more knowledge they have, they have the more challenges and aggravations of grief; so that glad would they be to forget many things which they cannot then be rid of.

2. When these general books, or records of all mens deeds, are produced, there is a peculiar book added; like as a Commander, or Judge, who having produced generally what such a mutinous Army and such a rebellious people, deserved, yet after, taketh out a peculiar paper, whereby grace and mercy is designed for some particular persons that they suffer not with the rest; so here, before Sentence pass, the book of life is looked, because (*John 6. 39. 40.*) all these Elect that were given to him, are to be accounted for now, and as it were, the roll is taken out, to see that the event answer His Commission. This sheweth also, that it is not by the former books (of their own reckoning,) but by grace, that even the Elect are absolved. By this *book of life*, is understood, 1. Gods peculiar purpose of and Election to glory of some, beside, and distinct from others. It is ordinarily thus expressed, because,

1. He hath them designed by name and surname, as in a particular record.

2. Called *book of life*, because that is the end of it, why he hath written such and such in it, and not others, the effect following to them, is life; so it is often expressed by a writing or book, *Exod. 32. 33. Isai. 4. 3.*

3. By this *book of life*, we would not understand Election strictly, as it respecteth the end only, but as it comprehendeth all conducing to that end, there being but one election, or book written concerning the end, *life*, and all midses leading thereto, as Redemption and the executing of that Covenant, *Psal. 40. 7.* as Repentance, Faith, &c. which book containeth Gods purpose, and the several means and steps whereby he hath made it effectual.

Again these are compared to a book, 1. for exactness, there is no change or mis can be here, all is on record. 2. To shew Christs faithfulness in his trust, who got the Elect to save, *John 6. 40.* and now produceth them all by name. 3. It is produced to shew the rise of the Elects Salvation, and what put the difference between them and others, and from whom all their Salvation dependeth; it is nothing in them, but in Gods Electing Grace.

This *book is also opened*, 1. because now it is known to all who are Elect, and who not, and never till now: and therefore ought it never to be enquired into, as to others, it being never opened till then. 2. Because then Gods good reason of proceeding in this sovereign work of Election in having mercy on whom he will, (which till this time hath been and shall be a mystery) shall then satisfyingly be clear why he choosed so many and no more, why such, and not others, this man living in such a time, and not this at another time. Here reason can-

not see, Therefore faith and fear would submit and forbear searching in some of these things, seeking rather to have the privileges and qualifications of these here inrolled, and waiting for satisfaction unto many questions at this day when we shall see him as he is.

It is an *other book*, different from the former books, which are common to the Reprobates; this is peculiar to the Elect; that of justice and judgement; this of sovereign grace. If any ask, why the book of life is produced here, and not Gods decree of reprobation also? *Ans.* Condemnation is an act of Justice, God condemneth, but according to and for their works, therefore there is no need of that decree: For, he judgeth impenitent sinners; but absolution is an act of grace, not going on our deservings. therefore there is need of this rule, or book, to proceed by, as distinct from our deservings. Beside, now God will have Reprobates acknowledging justice, and none shall blame Him for their condemnation or Reprobation, when their own guilt and Gods decree shall be manifested together: what ever man cavill now, no weight is laid on that decree in this sentence as a cause of it, but upon their own sins. On the contrary, he shall have all the Redeemed knowing, that the weight of all their salvation lieth on his grace and in his purpose, before any thing was done by them.

Now both these being cleared, (1. what men did, 2. who amongst men are appointed to life) the third thing, to wit, the sentence that is passed on these dead, followeth, *They were judged*, that is, received their last doom: But because it is a day of Justice, and sundry sorts, both sheep and goats are judged, Therefore there is not one sentence to all, but two qualifications of the sentence are added. 1. *They were judged out of those things that were written in the Books*; who wanted the written Law, have the Law of nature in their hearts for a Law, *Rom. 2. 12.* who lived under it, are judged by it; who heareth the Gospel, are judged according to it: mens receipts come in to this reckoning. In short, it is, Those written in the Book of life, are entered in possession of it according to the Word, *Come, ye blessed, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, Mat. 25.* Others are charged with their guilt, and have this sentence, *Depart from me, &c.*

The second qualification sheweth the justice thereof more, that it is according to their works, not for their works: Works here, are (to the Elect) the rule, not the cause of proceeding: and it importeth these things, 1. Generally, that there shall be justice in the sentence, or rather it shall be a just sentence, not passed on any by guile, or contrary to their deservings, but justly shall it be past, by a vindicative justice on the reprobate wicked and by a faithful righteous sentence of grace on the godly elect: Which is also just.

1. Because Christ hath paid for them, their debt is discharged by the cautioner.

2. Because God hath promised and engaged to pardon them in that book of redemption or life, and now he performeth and keepeth it. Hence it is said, *God the righteous judge will give the crown at this day, 2 Tim. 4. 8.* 2. It is suitable to folks works, he doth in that day good to these who are *righteous* and to the froward and wicked he pronounceth evil, as it is cleared, *Rom. 2. 6, 7, 8, 9.* when it is said, *He shall give to every one according to their works*: it is then thus distributed. Thus justice hath our works, not as the ground or cause of it, but as the evidences whereby the Elect are differenced from others. 3. It is proportionable, that is to say, not only glory to those that do well, but to those that abound in well-doing, great glory, and so it is not wrath only to the soul that doth much ill, but great wrath. Therefore it is said, (*Gal. 6.*) he that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly: for as a man soweth, so he shall reap, not only as to the kind, corruption from the flesh; or life from the Spirit; but even as to the degree, less or more according

according to their sowing, as in the parables of *talents* and *pounds* is clear, *Matth. 25.* and *Luke 19. 4.* It importeth a necessary connexion betwixt good works and glory; for, without holiness none shall see the face of God. What is meant by *according*, Christ holdeth it out, *Mat. 25. 29.* In that necessary connexion, that *he that hath*, shall get *more*; but not because he hath, but in order certainly it followeth, & *contra*; yet it is *freely given*. If any retort, that *according to works* in the wicked, importeth merit, Therefore so also in the Godly. I say, it importeth not, of it self, merit, to say *according to works*, as appeareth by the like phrases, *according to your faith* be it unto you; and in distributing the talents, *Mat. 25. 15.* He gave *according to* their several abilities. Their abilities may imply fitness in them, and proportionableness in distributing of them: yet none can say, *according (κατα)* implyeth merit in these places; and that it can import no merit properly taken here (though there be justice in the sentence and it be just, yet our works are not the ground of it) appeareth, 1. because grace and the book of life is here mentioned as the ground of proceeding in reference to the Elect. Now, if in as strict justice their works deserved life, as the wicked deserve death, there were no need of mentioning this Book so oft: Yea, 2. If *according to works*, were to be taken strictly, then it were inconsistent with this Book, which maketh all to be of grace, and of a like nature with its rise, even as it is grace: here grace and works are opposed, if of grace, then not of works; yea, *according to works* (so understood as causal) is opposed to this purpose of God, or His election, as *2 Tim. 1. 8.* *who hath saved and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His purpose and grace in Christ Jesus.* Where, 1. he joyneth saving (which taketh in all) and Gods purpose together, and maketh the one grace as the other is. 2. In both he opposeth works to grace, which cannot be understood simply, but as they look to merit; otherwise both take in works: and what reason can there be given here why this Book is so often mentioned in this judgement, but to shew that this last step of salvation is of the same nature with the first, which certainly (as to election) can be called no other than of grace. 3. Consider that when Christ speaketh more fully to this sentence, *Matth. 25.* He mentioneth some works, as visiting, clothing, &c. which certainly, as to the condignity of merit, can have no proportionableness to heaven and glory. And if any say, he so accounteth them, though they be not worthy. *Ans.* 1. Then that is improperly merit, whereas the other properly deserveth hell, Therefore the expression is not alike on both sides. 2. Then it followeth, it is grace that maketh the sentence pass on them and not strict justice, as on the other. 4. Consider here, that all, small and great, are judged, infants possibly never breathing out of their mothers belly: and can any say that such cannot be written in the Lamb's book of life, or that they have done any thing to deserve this last absolving sentence? It must therefore not be understood to infer merit to them.

To say by Baptism their sin is taken away. *Ans.* 1. That is contrary to Graces way and the nature of Gods Covenant to Believers and their seed, baptized or not; for, it condemneth all unbaptized; or, the argument will hold in them. 2. In Baptism children are passive, it is not their deed, if childrens Baptism deserve any thing, it must be here accounted on their score who performed it, not on the childrens, who must be judged according to their own works, and not to the works either of Parent or Minister; yet if it be considered, that the judgement passeth according to the Book of life, there is clear ground to lay it on grace and not on themselves or others, and the rule is one to all the Elect. 3. Consider that these works and books take in all the Elect, many of whom have many sinful actions and few good, and even those few are much corrup-

ted and imperfect. Now, it must either be said, 1. that no Elect cometh here to be judged, but he hath more good (at least) to deserve heaven than evil to deserve hell (which will seem hard to be said of profane men, converted possibly an hour before death) or we must say there are different rules to proceed by, in judging the Elect, some by grace and some by works, which is contrary to the text, that maketh one rule for all: and certainly any that is well versed in these books, will see no cause to plead thus, and all others shall see it when these books shall be opened; It is the ignorance of these that maketh men so plead. So this *according* then importeth a suitableness and connexion, as is said, but no merit.

*Inst.* But it is deserving to the wicked, therefore to the righteous. *Ans.* 1. This word here may import no deserving, that being (as to the wicked elsewhere clear) but a connexion with, and suitableness of one of these to the other, to wit, wicked living, and impenitent dying, with damnation. This is enough to vindicate justice, that he thus proceedeth. 2. Although it do imply merit in them, yet it will not follow, that it doth so in the Elect: not only for the former reasons; but, 1. because the sins of wicked men are perfectly sins, the good actions of the Godly are not so. 2. Because with the one, God proceedeth according to the Covenant of works, punishing for want of perfect holiness, aggravated also in some by their unbelief who heard the Gospel; but God proceedeth not by that Covenant with the Elect, but by the book of life, that hath the Covenant of grace depending on it. 3. Because any sin deserveth wrath, even the least (being a transgression of the Law) but many good works will not deserve heaven, because they are debts and cannot plead the performance of that Covenant except they be alwayes and in every thing perfect: for, life dependeth not on living well this year or two years, or for this good work or that, but on a perfect righteousness, which is marred by one sin (even original sin) though there be never more: for, *bonum non est nisi ex omnibus, malum ab unoquoque defectu.* If any ask, why works are mentioned here and not faith? *Ans.* 1. Faith and repentance are certainly included, not as works deserving, but as fruits of the Spirit in the Regenerate, and the want of them is sinful in the reprobate, who heard and believed not. And certainly according to this, they who heard are more severely judged; and therefore works here, must be understood generally, as it setteth out ones condition, good or evil, according to which the judgement proceedeth especially as they believed or not. 2. Faith is not expressly mentioned, because it is implied in Gods purpose of grace under the book of life, which taketh in faith as a middle, that it may be of grace, *Rom. 4. 16.* 3. Because it is not justification from sin before God that is here recorded, (that is past) but the manifestation of that before men, and it is one thing to justify before God, and another to save one that is justified, and declare them to be so, and works contribute most directly to this. 4. Works are especially mentioned in opposition to the wicked, who are condemned for their sins and want of good works; this stoppeth their mouth and sheweth the justice of the difference even before men: yet, upon the matter (*Chap. 21. 8.*) unbelieving is reckoned to the wicked, even as murder and adultery is, and so among the works of the Elect must be comprehended their fleeing to Christ by faith, whereby merit is overthrown.

*Vers. 13.* By clearing an objection, he openeth further what was said, which may be, many are rotten in the grave, (called here *hell*) are drowned in the sea, eaten with fishes, &c. (under which are comprehended all desperate-like deaths, as burning, sowing in ashes rotten heaps of dead bodies together: it may be said, how can these dead be said to be raised, and judged? It is shown, that even these same bodies by Gods power are judged with these that live in the flesh (by which, that

which



which looketh most impossible like is brought about) even as it willingly *for you in grace had given up these*, which from God they had only in keeping till this day.

By *hell* here may be understood (as ordinarily) the *grave*, (there being one word for both in the Original) or these bodies (if any be) that are in hell, such as *Korah, Dathan and Abiram* and others. But generally this is sure, that by these places, *sea, hell and death*, are meant all places where dead bodies are ordinarily buried, or extraordinarily crushed and destroyed: they shall all compear wherever they be.

They are said to *give up their dead*, that is, not by any faculty in these creatures, but it is easily, speedily and simply, as if in boxes they had been kept all distinct, and now they lay them out; which is done by Gods power, as He made the fish, only by a word, cast out *Jonah* on the dry land whole. It is called *their dead*, or *the dead* which was in them, to shew, 1. an account, as it were, every one maketh of their dead, as if they were answerable for them: It is to accurate, none is missed or kept back. 2. To shew, it is the same dead that are judged, and in the same bodies that died, and were buried or perished. It is (as *Job* saith, *chap. 19.*) he and none other for him; So it is they and none other for them: the same body, (as it is the same soul) compearth to get judgment according as they did in the flesh, it being suitable that the same body should share with the soul in its eternal condition. Here is a wonder, a thousand bodies are rotten together, possibly men feeding on others, and living on others dead bodies, yet now all are put to their own masters, none are wrong marrowed in the least pickle of dust.

It is added, and *they were judged*; this sheweth that this resurrection goeth before their sentencing, and that, as every one arose, and none were missed, so every one is judged and none misleth a just sentence; there is one rule, as there is one judgment: for, sin taketh impenitent sinners to hell, and none but the holy (though not for their holiness) are admitted to life. Concerning this judgement I would only add, 1. That it is not unlike, that as our Lord the Judge, shall visibly as man appear, so shall He vocally and audibly pronounce the sentence to the hearing of all (at least as to the main of the sentence, *Come ye, and depart ye, &c.*) This the Scripture seemeth to speak, and it is not inconsistent with the order of proceeding, and the intimating publickly of the sentence before men and Angels agreeing to that day, but very suitable to it: I say, as to the general sentence on the body of the Elect, and of the wicked respectively. And, therefore, secondly, it is not necessarily to ascribe this judgment to such a long time (as some do) as if every ones account and particular sentence were distinctly and successively to be handled. He saith at once to these on His right hand, and again one sentence to these on His left, together, *Mat. 25.* Particulars indeed are manifested, which are the grounds of every ones sentence, but that may be done

at an instant by our blessed Lord Jesus by opening the books, much more than the devil could at the twinkling of an eye (*Matth. 4.* and *Luk. 4.*) shew Christ the world and the glory of it.

The execution of this dreadful sentence followeth, in the last two verses, as it concerneth the wicked. 1. Consider the parties condemned. Then, secondly, the judgment or death they are adjudged unto. The parties sentenced, are (*ver. 14.*) *death and hell*, that is, the last enemies of Christ who are to be subdued, and now generally all His enemies (as may be gathered from *1 Cor. 15. 16.*) they are all in hell now, none in heaven, the earth is removed, and death and the grave have no power on the Elect. Therefore there is no service for them in time, which now is gone, the wicked are in hell, and death goeth with them, as having no more to do here.

By this then, *death and hell were cast in the lake*, is not meant any proper judgment on *death and hell* or the grave; but it holdeth out, first, that now all effects of sin and of the curse, as to the godly, are removed; and now all these go together to the pit with the Reprobate, and the company of the now glorified Elect is fully freed from them all, as *Chap. 22. v. 3.* which relateth to this. Secondly, That Christs victory is compleated, when death and the grave, that are amongst the last enemies, are subdued and have access no longer to trouble or detain any of His people, being now confined within the lake, signifying thereby both the absolute freedom of the Elect from them, and the full dominion (to say so) which they shall have over the Reprobate. 2. All who are not written in the Lambs Book of life, they are casten in this lake, all that are not elected; In a word, all the Reprobate, all that are not pardoned through Christ and by grace, not exempted from the deserving of their works, whether great or small, rich or poor, noble or ignoble, old or young, more civil or prophane, &c. The sentence is seen and may be known in the execution; They are cast into the lake, wherein the devil was cast, *vers. 10.* This is expounded to be *the second death*: that proveth this to be the general judgment when all the reprobates, put together, are sent thither. In a word, all these share with the devil and his angels in hells fire: where we may again see, 1. that the book of life, or way of grace, is that only which keepeth the Elect from this damnation; Yet, 2. that others get no wrong, for they deserved it; only God pardoned them not, which He was not obliged to do. 3. That there is a good agreeance and connexion between election and holiness, therefore they are judged according to their works: and none can say, let me live as I will, if I be elected, I will be saved; God putteth Works and this Book together as the rule, 1. To stop their mouths that perish, and to vindicate even His election in its execution from respect of persons. 2. To shew, that it is yet Grace that saveth: let not therefore these two be separated.

## LECTURE I.

## CHAP. XXI.

Verf. 1. **A**ND I saw a new heaven, and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea.



The last sentence being past in the former Chapter, and the execution of it, as to the wicked and reprobate, shortly pointed at: Followeth now the execution of the sentence as to the Elect, in this Chapter and Chap. 22. In the lake were casten all not written in the book of life; unto this holy City are admitted none, but such as are written in it: where-by it appeareth, that they are two estates and conditions that are opposed, eternal life to eternal death; of two opposit parties, the one including all the reprobate not written, the other taking in all these who are written in the book of life and no other. And so this is to be looked on as the continuance of the former narration concerning the execution of the last sentence which he now prosecuteth, as to the Elects happiness, whereof nothing was spoken in the preceeding Chapter. This happiness is set out, first, more generally in some antecedent circumstances concerning it, to ver. 9. Then, secondly, more particularly, by vision the new Jerusalem is manifested to John in a full view, to ver. 6. of Chap. 22. Then, thirdly, by word the Angel addeth some explication to John, till ver. 16. where Jesus cometh in Himself, which continueth till the close.

Whether this vision belongeth to the Church militant or triumphant, is disputed by many, and by some sober and learned Interpreters, is applied to the Church militant. Some making it to hold out a state of the Church contemporary with the seventh trumpet and the thousand years; Others making it belong to the state of the Church after the vials, when the fulness of the Gentiles and Jews shall become worshippers of our Lord Jesus; and so to them the former description of the day of Judgement is but by anticipation set down, and here John returneth again to point out the militant Church in her most glorious posture. It will be needful therefore to confirm this order and series laid down for clearing of the scope of these Chapters, 1. Then, the debate here is not simply, if a more flourishing estate of the militant Church be prophesied of in this book: for, on Chap. 16. 19, and 20. we have seen much of that to be spoken of, but only whether this vision doth further explicate these former prophecies, or prosecute the description of the triumphant Church after them. 2. We acknowledge many expressions here to be borrowed from the Prophets, by which in some holy hyperbolick manner they did set out the spiritual estate of the Church in the dayes of the Gospel. 3. We grant that the same expressions in themselves may in part be applied to the gracious estate of Gods Church here, and her glorious estate hereafter: yet this we assert, that what is intended by the Spirit here, as the scope of this vision, is principally, and chiefly (if not only) to be applied to the state of the Elect after the general Judgement, and can be properly applied to no state of the Church militant, which we do thus clear and confirm.

1. From the native series and order laid down, if the judgement preceeding be general to Reprobate and Elect, and the sentence in its execution be set down in reference to the Re-

probate before; Then it will follow, that natively the scope of this vision is to set out the good condition of the Elect in opposition to the former; the execution of the Reprobates sentence is first set down, because more shortly the wicked condition is past by, and the good condition of the Elect is more fully insisted on, as making most for their consolation. And though the matter and order of words do not alway agree in this prophesie, yet certainly it were unwarrantably rejected, where it sulteth well with the scope as here, when natively a good condition is set down, opposit to the evil condition going before, and that orderly to supply what was formerly wanting, to wit, what became of these that were written in the Lambs book of life, while all others are cast into the lake. This Chapter supplieth that, shewing that they entred into an excellent Jerusalem, out of which (ver. 27.) all others were excluded: which sheweth clearly, that the scope here is to continue that part of the execution of the sentence, as to the Elect, which was, until now, defective. Beside, it is not like, that the Spirit would insist so much in shewing what came of the Reprobate, and what effect the sentence had on them, and would nowhere shew what effect the sentence, or book of life, had on the Elect, which is no where else in this prophesie, if not here. And this would not suit with the scope of this prophesie, to neglect a thing of so much consolation and concernment unto the Church at all times, as this of the eternal good condition of all the Elect, which is the happy result of all their former wrestlings.

This argument from the series and acolutia of the prophesie, will bind the more strongly, If we consider, that there will hardly be found any such *hysteresis* or *hysteresia* in one and the same explicatory prophesie, (such as this is) for though an explicatory prophesie may go back over events contained in a principal prophesie, yet that in one and the same explicatory prophesie, there is such retrogressing over one event, to set down some other wholly antecedent to it, and having no connexion with any thing successive unto it, as this would be if it did belong to a state of the Church before the final sentencing of the wicked mentioned in the close of the former chapter, will not be easily found.

2. If it were any such good condition of the Church militant, it behoved to be either before the thousand years, (which none asserteth) or after it, and so after the seventh vial, which is impossible (because that bringeth the end with it;) or, it must be contemporary with it, which cannot be: for, 1. that thousand years good condition is not absolute. Satan is bound (but not cast in the lake) and that for a time, only, *Gog*, and *Magog* are afterward loosed; but here Satan is laid fast in his prison, and death and the curse are no more among any of this company. 2. Their reign here is not for a thousand years or a long time, but un-interrupted, for ever, Chap. 22. 5. And certainly by these and the like expressions, it is contradistinguished from the best and longest peace that the Church at any time hath had on the earth and particularly from that of the thousand years. Again, that reign of the thousand years followeth but the first resurrection, this followeth the second; that is, particular,



particular, this is general. Add, that good condition of the thousand years was applicable only to Saints of that time (as there was cleared,) but this agreeth to all the Elect living in whatsoever time, and none are secluded from it, but such as are not written in the Lambs Book of life.

3. This new earth, spoken of here, *ver. 1.* is certainly in opposition to the former, mentioned, *Chap. 20. 11.* which passed away; but that passing or fleeing away of heaven and earth, being antecedent and preparatory unto the last judgement, it must certainly be the last consummation of all things, and so this new heaven and earth (and this *Jerusalem* that contemporateth with it) which succeed and are opposed to the former earth and heaven, must be after the day of judgement, and therefore inconsistent with any estate of the Church militant.

4. This new *Jerusalem* coming down from heaven, is the same spoken of (*Chap. 3. 12.*) in the promise made to *Philadelphia*; but that is heaven, Therefore it is so here. And that all these promises in the Epistles, (*Chap. 2. and 3.*) do look to eternitie, the scope (which is to provoke wrestlers to overcome, at all times) maketh it clear, and none will think that that can be any peculiar condition belonging to a particular state and time of the Church here, which all overcomers have ever partaken of at all times; It must then be heaven.

5. That which is spoken of this holy city, will not in sundry things agree to the Church on earth, as particularly, 1. that there was no Temple there, *ver. 22.* Now by Temple here is understood (conform to this prophesie) one of two, 1. either some middle or ordinance leading to Christ, which was typified by the old Temple; and so the Church militant (though called sometimes *heaven*) yet never wanteth a Temple: and under the seventh trumpet particularly, *Chap. 11. ver. last.* it is marked, that then the Temple was opened in heaven and light and Religion in the Ordinances flourished: and that seventh trumpet is contemporary with the thousand years, as all acknowledge: Or, 2. by Temple is understood heaven itself improperly, (as *Chap. 3. 12. I will make him a pillar in the Temple of my God, &c.*) because the Temple held out more eminent and glorious enjoying of God; in which respect, (*ver. 22.*) God and the Lamb are called the Temple here, because by immediate enjoying of them, all Ordinances are supplied, and the use of them, and all light, *Chap. 22. 5.* is taken away. Now, by Temple here, is not understood any excellency of immediate enjoying of God; for, that is in this city: It must be therefore understood of mediate means, such as the Temple was, the taking away whereof, is a part of the perfection of that blessed state, whereas the enjoying of these Ordinances fully, is a part of the Churches happiest condition here on earth, seeing therefore this city hath no Ordinances, and it is a part of its perfection to want them, It can be applicable to no state of the Church militant, but only triumphant, wherein the Churches happiness exceedeth her happiest condition on earth, more than the opening of the Temple exceeded its shutting: and it is set forth in this expression, to shew that this is not that state of the Church, mentioned *Chap. 11. 15.* but one succeeding to, and exceeding it, as it did what was before it.

Again, These who plead for Christs personal presence during the thousand years on earth, do argue the same consequent from this place, and say, that Ordinances cease then; for, what need is there of a glasse to behold Christ when Himself is present? so *Tylingast, &c.* *Ans.* 1. This argument will indeed conclude against these who disclaim that opinion in that part. But, 2. even this place will conclude against that presence also; for here, not only is there an immediate enjoying of Christ the Lamb, but of the Lord God Almighty also, *ver. 22. and Chap. 22. ver. 4.* they see His face; and in Scripture there is no immediate enjoying of God spoken of, but as in heaven, vision

being the form of our blessedness in our Country. Hence this is a second instance, that this cannot agree to the Church on earth, but in heaven, thus, Immediate enjoying of God belongeth not to the Church on earth, but in heaven; But the Church in this new *Jerusalem*, hath that, *ut supra. Ergo, 3.* If we consider also the parties admitted to this city, we will find that it will agree to no state of the Church on earth, they are Elect, and only Elect, *ver. 27.* and this must be understood of Elect, not only who are so in appearance, but who are such indeed, *ex veritate rei*: for, they are here so written who are admitted, as they were not written who were mentioned, *Chap. 20. ult.* and are not admitted (the writing of the one being directly opposed to the not writing of the other) but there, they mentioned who were casten in the lake, are not only these who seemed, or outwardly appeared not to be written, but these who really were not written, whatever shew they had (for, they were cast in the lake) The difference betwixt them is not put here in shew, but in reality and verity of deed. Beside, where is writing in the Lambs book taken in this prophesie, or in the Scripture, for appearing to be so? for so one might be said to be written in the Lambs book of life, and yet cast into the lake of fire, and so not be written into it at the same time, which were absurd. But we shall weigh this argument more on the words.

6. If all without this city (or, if to be without it, be all one as to) be in the lake, Then this must be heaven or the Saints eternal happiness, opposed to the eternal misery of the wicked; But all without this city are in hell, and to be without it and in hell are one. The first is clear: the city mentioned (wherein all mens happiness consisteth) *Chap. 22. 14, 15.* is this city described here, that hath such excellent gates, and the tree of Life growing in it, (See, *ibid. ver. 3.*) But to be without this, is hell, compare *ver. 15. Chap. 22. dogs, &c.* are without, and not thus happy: what that condition of these dogs and sorcerers is, is set down, *Chap. 21. ver. 8.* It is to be cast into the lake, that is the second death. This then must be eternal life, which the Elect are admitted unto, that being the life only which is opposed to the second death.

7. Add, to be a partaker of this City, and to eat of the fruit of the tree of life that groweth in the Paradise of God, is a privilege promised to all Believers, and is performed to all overcomers, at all times, as *Chap. 22.* compare *ver. 2.* with *14. 1.* He is blessed that cometh to this happiness. 2. It is they that do His commandments. So it is a happiness that followeth holiness, and by holiness men come to enter to it. 3. Beside this, to eat of the tree of life is promised to all that ever shall come to heaven. See *Chap. 2. ver. 7.* and all the scope here (See *Chap. 21. ver. 7.* and *22. ver. 12, 14, 15.*) holdeth forth the last good condition, and great encouragement and promise which is made to all wrestlers; which certainly sheweth that heaven is intended here, that being only the last great and common encouragement: for if this set out the estate of the militant Church, it must either set out what is alway common to her at all times as such, (this none will assert) or, it must describe some peculiar condition applicable to some time only, but that is not either; for, if it were so, then the privileges spoken of this state of the Church, could not be applied at all times to Believers; but they are applied at all times to Believers under any cross, for their encouragement, Therefore it setteth out no peculiar state of the militant Church, and so by consequence none at all.

Although it should be said, (as some do) that this will not prove that these promises are not to be fulfilled on earth, but only that then all Saints that ever lived shall partake of them: and therefore an Author, of late, maketh use of this Scripture to prove the resurrection of all the Saints before the day of judgement unto an happy condition upon earth; for, saith he,

This here spoken of, is to be fulfilled on earth; but this belongeth to all overcomers, to eat of the tree of life, &c. Therefore all overcomers must be raised and brought to the earth to partake of it. This, I say, will rather confirm our argument than elude it. For, 1. that consequence of his goeth upon the supposition that this belongeth to the Church on earth; which we deny: These who assert otherwise, would look that they strengthen not such a consequent. 2. Seeing these happinesses are promised to all overcomers, are they not verified to them at all times? and can any think that souls, immediately after death and victory, were not brought unto this City, or made partakers of the tree of life? Is that promise suspended till Christs second coming, when this Church-state shall be set up on earth? Yea, on the contrary, doth not this strongly conclude against it, this tree of life groweth in Paradise, but Paradise is heaven, to which the thief on the cross was brought that same very night he died, *Luk. 23*? and is he not then a partaker of the fruit of that tree? If then that was Paradise to which the thief was admitted at Christs suffering, then the Paradise in which the tree of life groweth, can be no particular state of the Church on earth: but heaven is that Paradise where the tree of life groweth. Compare *Chap. 22. 2.* with *Chap. 2. 7.* Again, there is no promise (*Chap. 2. and 3.*) made to the overcomers, but are generally such as are fulfilled to the overcomer after death, and when these (that here are given) are for that same scope, and some of them intermixed in the same places, It will be hard so to difference them, as that they did not partake of these formerly mentioned, untill these thousand years did begin: for, this Paradise was in the thiefs time, *Paul's time, 2 Corinth. 12. 4.* Therefore ought not to be restricted to this.

It may also not be without weight to consider, that this being the last thing described in this prophesie, upon the back of the Churches temporal difficulties, and also agreeing in itself well to heaven, that it is more suitably applied to it, than to any other condition, this being the great result of all the Churches former trials; and it is more comfortable to have the narration of her estate, at the description of her eternal happiness, than at any other period whatsoever, shewing that Gods care of His people shall continue till they be in heaven, and so concludes, because their condition is eternal.

Although I mind not to insist on the objections, but to leave them to the opening of the words following, and their series; Yet, considering that some do allege many things for the contrary opinion, I shall say two words in reference to two sorts of them.

1. Learned *Mide*, goeth about to contemporate this state of the Church here with the seventh trumpet, *Chap. 11.* or, (as he speaketh) with that interval which is to be betwixt the beasts destruction and the end of the world. But, 1. There is a twofold mistake in the very rise of this *Synchronisme*, 1. that it supposeth the seventh trumpet to presuppose the utter abolition of the beast, and so only to contemporate with the seventh vial, of this was spoken, *Chap. 11. last ver. and 20. Lett. 4.* The second mistake is, that it supposeth this new state of the Church to succeed immediately upon the beasts overthrow, which it doth not till the Dragon be taken and casten where the beast was before him, as in the former series (*Chap. 20.*) appeareth. Again, beside this, the grounds upon which he buildeth this *Synchronisme*, will not sustain it. 1. Not this, that the Bride here is the same with her spoken of *Chap. 19. 6, 7, &c.* because she getteth the same name, therefore is this contemporary with that; for though it may be the same Church, yet will it not follow, that it is the same Church so considered and at the same time, because it getteth the same name: certainly Christs Church at any time on earth, is His Bride,

and so is she at the day of Judgement, *Eph. 5. 27, &c.* Yet, it will not follow, that where she getteth these names, she is still to be taken as militant, more than we might argue, that Church, *Chap. 21.* is the triumphant Bride; Therefore so is that, *Chap. 19. 7.* The same will answer the second argument also, which saith this is called the holy city, but (*Chap. 20. ver. 8.*) the holy city is compassed after the thousand years, Therefore this holy city was before that time. This will prove indeed, that there was a Church then, or that the Church, now glorified, did at such a time suffer, and was encompassed, (for, there is still but one Bride, one Catholick Church and Family in heaven and earth, *Eph. 3.*) but it will not prove that the Church, as here considered, was put to suffering: yea, there seemeth to be expresse difference, this is not only *Jerusalem* or the holy city that is the Bride, but it is *new Jerusalem*, to distinguish it from what it was formerly, such a city as cannot be compassed, therefore are its gates never shut; such a city as no enemy can molest, or no dog can approach unto, and that not for a thousand years only, but for ever: all which, are certainly to oppose it to the Churches militant condition formerly exprest. The other two grounds which he addeth, are suspected by himself. Neither can any think, that because (*Chap. 16. 17.*) it is said, *it is done*, which words are again repeated, *Chap. 21. 5, 6.* therefore they belong to one time, it is rather thus, *Chap. 16. 17.* It is said to be done, because near the consummating, that seventh vial bringing with it the end, *Chap. 21. 6.* because actually consummated. His last presumption, because its one of the Angels of the vials that sheweth it to *John*, can conclude nothing, except we say, that God could not make use of an Angel to shew to *John* His Church triumphant as well as militant: and if this be conclusive, it may plead to have it contemporary with any one of the vials as well as this; for, no particular vial is mentioned: yea, it is like, all this prophesie being shown to *John* by one Angel, *Chap. 1.* it might therefore plead for a contemporariness amongst all the parts of it; but himself doth not lay weight on it.

A second word is to such as think it belongeth to the Christian Church after the *Jews* conversion, because of the expressions that are made use of in it. I shall not insist on all (leaving particulars to their proper place) but say, however this be applied, it is certainly not literally to be taken; and therefore, that the *Kings bring their glory to it, &c.* is not to be understood of temporal glory, more than by gold or precious stones we must conceive a material building, because such matter is mentioned. If therefore the expressions must be figuratively taken, and may as pertinently be applicable to heaven as to the Church-militant; we are to consider to which they are to be applied by the scope and other arguments in it self, whereof we have spoken and by which we are content that it be determined. And therefore we say, that the like expressions in the Prophets are not to be made equipollent to these here, except it be clear that they aim at one scope; for, it is not words and expressions that we conclude from, but from many things put together, as is said: for, although the Prophets here and there, dropped some such expressions, to hold forth the excellency of the Gospel-administration before it came, beyond what then was; Yet, is there in any of them such a full and heavenly description put together as this? or can any future estate of the Gospel-church beyond what was in *John's* time be looked-for, which will exceed it, as far as the Gospel-church doth the Jewish; that *John* should go so far beyond their manner in the describing of it? and we are sure that the application thereof to heaven, hath with it a far more convincing impression on the hearts of the Readers, as finding therein a comfortable relish for their refreshing, which another application would mar, beside, that straining of it, will hardly be eschewed by so carrying on the application thereof.



We come now to speak of the first general description of heaven that is set down in more general steps, yet exceeding significant, to ver. 9. 1. What John saw, ver. 1. and, 2. Then what he heard and was told, of for confirmation of the first, in the rest of the verse. Both tend to set out this happiness of the Saints eternal condition.

The 1. thing he saw, is a new heaven and a new earth. 2. A proof that it is so, or a reason why it is new, is given, because the former was passed away. 3. It is particularly noted, there was no more sea. That this relateth to the great change that shall be by fire on all the world, we take for granted, as being a thing following the great judgement and making way for the Saints eternal blessedness. It is the very former change, mentioned, Chap. 20. ver. 11. which sheweth, that this is the continuation of that narration: as if one asked, what followed then, when the heavens and the earth passed away? I saw, saith he, a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth, &c. are passed away, whereby the succeeding of this to the former is clear. There are three particulars here to be inquired in, 1. What this passing away of the heaven and earth is, succeeding to the former, and therefore not contemporary with it, which is here called the first heaven in respect of that which followed. 2. What this new heaven and earth is. 3. How it is said there was no more sea. Of these we are not curiously to enquire; but seeing it is a part of Gods Word given for consolation to Believers, we shall soberly assert what we think truth in this.

Therefore we say, 1. That these words speak of a change (even on the universe it self, literally so to be taken) and that same which is mentioned by Peter, 2 Epist. 3. 13. where, when he hath spoken of the dissolution of the world by fire, (which by the Schoolmen is called *ignis conflagrationis*) he addeth as a consolation, *But we look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness*, of this doth the present place speak: where, on the by, we say, it is wonderful to us how learned men (as Mede in his treatise *de oikoumeni melastasi*) should apply that place of Peter, to a condition of the Church on earth, seeing there this new heaven and new earth is expressly said to follow the earth that now is, and that after it is dissolved by fire, Is there a Church to be in the world after that dissolution? And whereas he fasteneth that exposition upon that place of Peter from Isaiah 65. and 66. we conceive it were fitter to expound that place of Isaiah, as the obscurer by that place of Peter, as that which is more clear, and so both to speak of the Churches eternal condition properly, after these elements shall be dissolved, if it be necessary to apply both to one thing.

2. This supposeth a great change, such as shall put all in a far other shape and frame than now they are in; this cannot be questioned; how far and in what manner, is only disputed: for, that all must be destroyed and burnt with fire, is granted by all, and therefore justly what remaineth is called new.

3. We take this for certain also, that this passing away looketh but to the visible heavens, air, earth and water, and doth neither extend to that blessed mansion of the Elect souls (called *Cælum Empyreum*) or Kingdom prepared for them, nor yet to the place of torment, where damned spirits and reprobates are for ever to ly under the wrath of God: for, 1. that place of joy, it is said to be prepared from the foundation of the world for them, Matth. 25. Which expression *prepared*, being compared with Heb. 11. ver. 10. doth not only hold forth a most excellent glory and singular exquisite workmanship, for which cause God is said to be the builder and maker thereof, *τεχνιτης*: not elsewhere applied to him in reference to any other piece of his work, as having given a special proof of his admirable art and skill in that; but also doth ascribe the same to its first creation, which admitteth not of any intervening

change. Again this being the mansion of glorified Saints and the same heaven unto which all the Elect will be gathered at the resurrection, and still spoken of in Scripture as one and the same; and it being fully glorious for their satisfying happiness in the enjoying of Gods presence therein, we can apprehend no change incident thereunto, beside that it is called *eternal*, 2 Corinth. 5. ver. 1. in opposition to other things that are called temporal. Neither can there be any effect of sin or of the curse supposed to have any influence on that blessed mansion. And therefore it not being, as other creatures, made subject to vanity (no unclean thing entering there) there can be no necessity of purifying it, or making such a change on it, as on the rest. 2. For hell, it is also said to be prepared for the devil and his angels, wherein also many Reprobates are before this last judgement (as by the parable of the rich glutton is clear, Luk. 16.) Therefore it is not a new hell they go unto that day, more than a new heaven. Neither can any end of renewing hell be given, it being no way to be bettered (as other creatures are by this change) except we say, as Aquinas and the Schoolmen, that this consummation putteth every thing in its perfection, and doth so to hell also, by transmitting the dross of all the creation, devils, reprobates, death, &c. unto it. But this confirmeth what we said.

4. We take it for granted, that there is not a full annihilation of this universe by this change, so that there should be nothing after it, but heaven and hell; but a change only it must be, though a wonderful great change. This all the places, that speak of a new heaven and a new earth, do confirm, as succeeding in the room of the former. Beside, the phrases holding forth this change, will import but a change and no annihilation, as will appear: yea this exception, that there shall be no more sea, confirmeth it; for it supponeth somewhat more to befall it than the heaven and the earth, which could not be if the annihilation of all were absolute.

5. The question therefore lieth mainly in this, whether that change be substantial, so that these heavens and this earth being removed, there are new heavens and new earth again created: or if that change be but in respect of qualities, as it is with the body of man, which is raised the same, as to its substance; yet so as to its qualities, it may be called another, for its spiritualness, purity, glory, incorruptibleness, &c. (I mean of the bodies of the Elect) even as in that comparison used, 1 Corinth. 15. The corn that groweth up is called another grain than that which was sown, in respect of its accidents and appearance; so may this earth be called a new earth in these respects. We conceive this last to be truth, that as the heavens and earth are not substantially changed, nor annihilated, so the new earth and heaven succeeding, are the same for substance, but for nature more stable, for beauty more glorious, for use free from the abuses sinful men put them unto, and from the effects of the curse put upon them for mans sin, they are altogether freed and set at liberty from these. Therefore (Acts chap. 3. ver. 21.) it is called *the time of restitution of all things*.

For confirmation whereof, we may consider, 1. These places wherein this change is most expressly mentioned, as Psalm 102. ver. 8. 16. with Hebrews chap. 1. ver. 10. *They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment, as a vesture shalt thou fold them up and they shall be changed*. Which words bear out, 1. a total overturning of heaven and earth as to its outward frame: Yea, 2. That upon the matter, in its substance, it is but a change, but so universal and great, as maketh it not to be then what it is now. A second expression, is, 1 Cor. 7. *The fashion of this world passeth away*, the word is *χρῆμα*, used to set out the change on our bodies Philip. 3. 21. whereby he would seem to hint, that this change is more on its outward appearance

rance than on its substance. A third place most plain and full is, 2 *Pet.* 3. *ver.* 10, 12, and 13. *The heavens shall pass away with a noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, &c.* See also, *vers.* 5, 6, 7. where the destruction by fire is compared with that which went before by water. Where, 1. It is to be gathered, that that fire melteth the elements and consumeth them not, even as a goldsmith doth with mettall that he hath a mind to put a new form or mould upon. 2. That out of this resulteth the new heaven and earth as a refined lump, from which the dross is taken away. 3. That as there was no substantial change by water, so neither by fire (though in that respect it is called the *old* world, and the other the world that *now is*) only that made the change to the worse, this of fire to the better.

For a second confirmation, we would consider that famous place, *Rom.* 8. 19, 20, 21, 22. where the scope purposely is to prove the glorious condition the Saints have to expect after this, and that such, that even senseless creatures wait and long for, as being to be made partakers of it at the general manifestation of the sons of God. Where observe, 1. That by *creature* in the singular number, *ver.* 19, and 20. is understood the universe, as contradistinguished from the Elect, and such a creature as by the sin of man is made subject to vanity, and so is not to be understood of the whole creation simply, as certainly neither of Angels nor of the seat of the blessed. 2. That mans sin had had much influence on the cursing of this creature, partly with barrenness, tempests, &c. contrary to its first nature; partly, by making it the theater where much sin and many changes have been acted: partly, by abusing it against the end appointed by God to our vain ends. 3. That there is a time of delivering Gods sons from the bondage of sin they ly under, fully. 4. That the creature here mentioned, is to be fully delivered from the effects of sin and the curse also; Therefore, 1. It is said to be *subdued under hope*, not for ever. 2. It expecteth that and groaneth for it, not as if it were sensible, but by a natural inclination to it, and this is so sure as if it had knowledge, it would groan: so it is said, *the high wayes mourn, Lament.* 1. 3. Because (*vers.* 21.) it is expressly said, that it is to be delivered from bondage and to share of that liberty of the sons of God, and as their change is not substantial, but qualitative, from the worse to the better; so shall it, in some proportionable suitable manner, be freed from changes, corruption, &c. and be in an other way glorious. These excellent priviledges waited for by the creature, cannot consist either with annihilation or substantial change, but with a qualitative mutation far to the better, though we cannot in every thing satisfy our curiosity about it, neither should we aim at that.

If any ask, what can be the use of this earth? or, to what end it is, seeing *Peter* saith, righteousness is to dwell in it? *Ans.* It is enough that God maketh it for His own glory, which was the end He made all things for, *Prov.* 16. 2. Are there not many things now made, whereof we cannot give the use, (possibly, many parts of the world never yet inhabited? Or, may there not be many reasons which we cannot now tell, though we will know in that day His design in that? Again, are there not many members in mans body, who is raised with difference of sex, and yet who can tell the use of them, only God thinks it meet, there being then no marrying nor eating, men living like Angels? But, 3. Will it not evidence Gods power and greatness, and be a standing monument of that? and will it not be some trophy of the full and final abolition of death, when the effects of it, as to the creature, are taken away? which it is like would never have perished either by fire or water had not sin come in and *unwillingly* made it to be subject, Therefore some way it is meet that it should also be freed.

The last observable thing in the great change of the world,

is, that *there was more no sea*: for understanding this, we permit, 1. that *sea* is not allegorically or improperly to be understood for troubles and storms, which then the world is to be free of, though that be a truth. But the *sea* here must be understood properly as the *earth and heavens* in the words before, it being that *sea* which is a part of this universe. 2. It would seem, that to say that the *sea* were new also, would not agree, there being some peculiar thing said of the *sea* in its passing, more than is said of the *earth and heaven*. 3. Yet hardly can it be said that the fire of conflagration shall destroy all the element of water, and so dry up the *sea*, because there is now no use of it: for, it may be said, 1. that there is no use of the *earth* either. 2. That that conflagration purgeth the elements but annihilateth them not, but bringeth them into their perfection, as it doth all the world, a great part whereof is the element of water. We shall, without insisting, lay down three wayes how we may take the words, 1. *There was no more sea*, because by that fire all the elements are melted, and made to run together, as it were, in one lump; and so there is all that was, but not distinctly *sea* from *earth*, but all together; that world to come being a result of their melting and intermixing one with another, when all of them are purified. 2. But because the *heavens* and the *earth* are looked on still as distinct, it will be hard to confound the water and the *earth and heaven*, though it may be probable. It is said, that by *sea* is not meant the element of pure water, but that body of salt mixed waters, separated from the *earth*, and put in bounds by it self: which differeth also from other waters, and hath a moving fleeting nature, as it is the *sea* useful for commerce amongst men. The *sea* thus understood, say they, is no more: not that all waters are dried up, but this *sea* is purified, that it is no more *sea* having the properties, uses, and differences which now it hath from other waters; and to this purpose do they make use of *Gen.* 1. where mention is made of waters, before ever there was a *sea*. And so they make the taking away of *sea*, not to be an annihilating of waters simply, but the reducing of the *sea* to the original nature (if not to the place) of the first waters, so that it is not now *sea*, as by that first appointment of God (*Gen.* 1. 9, and 10.) it was. 3. It may be understood thus, the former *heaven and earth* were passed away, and *there was no more sea*, that is, the change extended it self not only to *heaven and earth*, but to the *sea* also, even although folks would think it less probable that the *sea* should be altered with fire; and as they *went away*, yet not simply, but the former *heavens*: so here is to be understood, the *sea* was no more, that is, the former *sea*, but it was changed also. And this we think the simplest meaning, and may someway be reconciled with what went before; and what is spoken of the *sea* here, is the same which was spoken of the *earth*, *Chap.* 20. 11. only the change is more palpable on it; for although it continue to be water, yet it continueth not to be *sea*, it not being of the substance and essence of water to be *sea*.

From this great change, we may learn, 1. not to fix too much on creatures, which are passing, but on God who is the same, and changeth not, *Psal.* 102. It is the Apostles advice, *1 Cor.* 7. 27, 29, &c. Mortification is a good study, for this world passeth away.

2. It would press us to holiness, seeing such a trial and change will be, 2 *Pet.* 3. 11. what manner of persons ought we to be, seeing all these things must come to pass? in all godly conversation, waiting for that dissolving. Assure your selves it will be, and where will the sinners appear in that day?

It is much disputed by the Schoolmen how the Godly then living, and these that are again raised, are differenced from the wicked at that time, and what pain this fire is to them: And here ignorantly and superstitiously they conclude, that it serveth



serveth in stead of purgatory to these that were living, or shall be at that time. But, to leave curiosity, this is sure, 1. that the end of that fire is neither to pain nor to fire or purge the Elect, it being impossible that fire material can take away sin (except it be meritoriously, and that cannot be though they did suffer; for, many suffer then and merit not, but this is founded on the rotten grounds of self righteousness. Beside, this fire is not voluntary, therefore (according to their own principles) cannot satisfy. But the end of this, is the changing of this visible world and the putting an end to time. 2. It is like, the change of the living Godly, will not be by this fire, 1. because if *Paul* were living, he would be changed, *1 Cor. 15*, yet would he not, likely, suffer fire. 2. Their change is done in the twinkling of an eye, which cannot be by fire. 3. It is not death (for all shall not die,) but in place of death, whereas certainly fire would infer dying, it being a material

fire. 3. However we conceive the order of proceeding at the last Judgment, yet it is like that the resurrection of the dead Elect, and the changing of the living, with their taking up to meet the Lord, *1 Thess. 4*. (if not the final sentence on all) shall go before this fire, the opening of the graves which must be before this fire and the seas giving up of her dead, implyeth this; the glorified condition therefore of the Elect being begun, and the sentence having passed, belike, on the wicked also, (Christ thereby continuing last on the field as Conquerour and Victor) before this fire, the Elect are all without the reach thereof: for, all the Elect that are then living, or formerly dead and glorified, must be in one condition (the bodies of the one being on the earth as the persons of the other are) and being it cannot be said of the glorified elect that they suffer fire, or are to be purged; so neither can it be said of the other.

## LECTURE II.

Verf. 2. *And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

3. *And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*

4. *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*

5. *And he that sat upon the throne, said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.*

6. *And he said unto me, It is done: I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, I will give unto him that is athirst, of the fountain of the water of life freely.*

7. *He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.*

8. *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*

**T**his is the first thing *John* saw, as an antecedent to the discourse following of the glory of the Elect; for, if all the earth be new and glorious, much more they. Now followeth, more particularly, the change that is made on the Church of the Elect, when they are gathered together, and the world now is new and another thing than it was, so is the glorified Church new and another thing (as to her qualities and glory) than before. After I had seen the new earth (saith he) I saw also the new Church, exceeding beautiful, no city, no Bride so adorned on her marriage-day as she is, she is so glorious, when He getteth but a little view of her. Concerning the glorious description we would permit.

1. That it is almost all one, whomsoever or whatsoever we understand as the party described; 1. Whether it be heaven, the place of blessedness; or, 2. the glorified Elect, who are blessed and adorned in this place: or, 3. the happiness and blessedness of the enjoyment of God by these elect Saints in this place of glory. Certainly none of these can be excluded, this being clearly the scope, to shew the good condition of all

those who are written in the Lambs Book of life, opposite to the misery of those who are not written: all must be taken-in, both who are thus adorned, where and with what they are made thus happy. We shall not therefore be curious to distinguish them, they scope being to shew, that the Elect are in a most happy condition.

2. That this happiness is figuratively set out, two ways, 1. By such things as are most precious unto men, and of greatest value, as of gold, precious stones, and excellent building, a byide, &c. though the things themselves infinitely exceed any thing they can be represented by. 2. By these things that are most precious, even to the people of God, as the tabernacle, outward ordinances, Gods presence with them, &c. which being to them of more worth than the former, do serve notably to illustrate and to commend this happiness unto them.

3. That the manner also is figurative, holding forth these things, in such a manner, and by such expressions, as may make them most intelligible unto men, who here are strangers to these mysteries: and therefore we are to conceive of the expressions as they conduce to this scope.

4. Hence

4. Hence it is not needful to enquire in every particular part of the allegory or similitude, as if it did set forth some different thing: it is enough they all concur to set out one general, to wit, the excellency of this good condition: therefore are we not to understand one thing by this *stone*, another thing by that; one thing by the *City*, another thing by the *Bride*, (though in a good sense it may be) it is enough that they together shew that it is glorious, so that this city *cometh down from heaven*, that it hath *twelve gates*, and that the *tree of life* hath *twelve manner of fruits*, &c. They are but expressions accommodated to our up-taking of them, and so discovered to John in the vision, that they may be known to be more than a common city, tree, &c. that are here. They are heavenly, even as the taking of John to a great high mountain, (ver. 10.) is set down to make out the coherence of the allegory. It is marked that the City came down, and he was taken up, whereby the more conveniently he might see it, which yet is not locally done, but in vision.

Particularly there is here a *City*, 1. named; 2. described; 3. commended. John putteth to his name here, *I John saw it*, to confirm it by such a witness, whose testimony is true, Joh. 21. and to make it passe with credit; he feigned it not, but saw it in vision, though far short of the thing it self.

1. The City is named, *the new Jerusalem*. That by *Jerusalem* is signified the Church, is clear in Scripture, for the special privileges *Jerusalem* had in her. There is a threefold *Jerusalem* in the Scripture, 1. *Legal Jerusalem*, which long since is destroyed, and as to its ceremonies is in bondage, Gal. 4. 2. A *Jerusalem* that now is, (i. e. the Gospel-church) called the *mother of us all*, Gal. 4. 3. It is taken for the heavenly *Jerusalem* or the glorified triumphant Church, where God immediately dwelleth with His people, whereof that earthly *Jerusalem* was but a type, Heb. 12. 22. so we understand *Jerusalem* there as including heaven, where Angels and just men made perfect are, and the Church militant, as it is the first step to this, and by which we have right to it through the Covenant of Grace in the Church. It taketh in the Elect glorified and militant; for, there is but one family, Eph. 3. 15. This is called *Jerusalem*, 1. Because typified by the first *Jerusalem*. 2. Because it is the same Church glorified that was before, even as it is the same world now which shall be then. Only it is called *new Jerusalem*, not only to distinguish it from the Jewish *Jerusalem*, but even from the evangelick, which is called the *holy City* before, Chap. 11. but not the *new City*. It is *new Jerusalem*, as the *earth is new*, in the words before, that is, fully freed from all corruption, and by its qualifications another thing than it was, though as to the persons the same, yet now perfectly glorified and glorious, another sort of Church then, nor now, though the same Church, yet now presented, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, Eph. 5. 27.

The second part is its description, It is said to be *coming down from heaven*. This supponeth no local mutation of the place described, but the excellent nature and quality of it, (whether place or person) that such a City was never on the earth, it was a thing that was of a heavenly original, therefore (Heb. 12. 22.) called heavenly: for, to be in this City supponeth ascending, and is all one with having Christs new name written on them, which is heavenly glory, as appeareth, Chap. 3. ver. 12. This *coming down*, is either generally to shew that it is heavenly, 1. It riseth not out of the earth, no not this new earth, it hath a more glorious rise. Or, 2. so it appeareth to John as descending, that he may see it; yet, as would seem, it was still high, therefore needeth he to ascend (ver. 10.) to see it. Both which are but to clear this, how John here saw the heaven, It descended and I ascended (would he say) to see it, though it be in vision. 3. It may be said to descend, not as to have its abode upon earth, but as look-

ing to the Church in its first presenting before God at that day, as it is, Eph. 5. 27. he so expresseth it as beholding all the Saints and Glory in heaven descending, (It being otherwise impossible to conceive of heavenly things) as it were, like a *Bride* on the great marriage-day; and possibly, it may relate to Christs coming with his Saints to judgement by a local descension at the dissolution of this earth. But as we said, the expressions are not too much literally to be strained.

This *descension*, or *coming down*, is also chiefly for its commendation: That, 1. it is of Gods building and dressing, it cometh from him. 2. It is to be a constant dwelling to men (as the first voice cleareth, ver. 3.) as if it did descend to them, they shall have heaven for earth; that shall be the exchange.

The third thing is the commendation of this City: It is, 1. called a *holy city*: for now the spirits of just men are made perfect, and so are their bodies; and no unclean thing entereth here, but such as are holy. *Jerusalem* also is ordinarily for Gods presence and worship in it, called the *holy city*; much more may heaven be for that reason.

The commendation more particularly, is, that *she is prepared as a bride adorned for her husband*: she is tight every way, and excellent in her glorious apparel and new cloaths, braver than any Bride that ever was (as having a more excellent husband than any) yet that is not all. Before, she was a preparing, now she is prepared and fully made ready; formerly there was calling to the marriage-supper, but here the bride is brought to her husband. In a word, now she is fitted in a stately manner, suitable to the bridegroom, who now is not the wooer, but her husband. And all these adornings are heavenly, such as she from heaven bringeth with her, and he hath put on her. And there is nothing wanting that may adorn her, and, as it were, her marriage-day being come, not a wrong pin is in her. The general keepeth the scope of the similitude fully, she is (as Psal. 45.) *brought unto the king in rayment of needle work*: which is spoken of this same glory, when the bride, fully glorified, shall be made ready to enter the Kings palace. And this new Church being distinguished from this new world, and not the same (as it would be, if it were to be understood on earth) but succeeding to that change, we may clearly see that it is not that here, but that same, Chap. 3. ver. 12. which is more particularly afterward insisted on.

This glorious state of the Elect, and the solace which they enjoy in this happiness, being discovered in a little glance to Johns view, Followeth now a further confirmation thereof by two voices to his ear. The first is general, out of heaven, from such as knew best; the second from God himself or the Lamb, ver. 5, &c.

The voice is first described, Then the matter spoken is set down, as of more credit from such a voice. It is a voice for its distinctness and intelligibleness: not confused like thunders or waters, but that which he heard was plain to his ear, as that which he had seen was to the eye. It will take up all senses to discern heaven rightly, and there is happiness there to delight them all. Beside, one sense is more easily de-luded than two; here therefore both by seeing and hearing John beareth witness. It is called a *great voice*, 1. to shew that it is a concerning matter that is expressed. 2. To shew that it is no ordinary Herald that cryeth it: and therefore men would be stirred up to hear and believe what is spoken concerning heaven. 3. It is from heaven, because only those are best acquainted with the glory thereof here mentioned. Beside, if there be joy in heaven at the conversion of a sinner, much more when the marriage is solemnized; it would seem to relate to that.

2. The matter beginneth with a *Behold*, for the former reasons. It is a wonderful thing to be observed by all, that such a nearness should be betwixt God and men. Hear, observe, be-



lieve, and wonder. The master setteth out the happiness of the Saints, two ways: 1. In their positive happiness and good condition. 2. In their freedom from all difficulties.

Their positive happiness is set out under the most excellent similitudes and promises of happiness that Israel had. Now, all these are fulfilled, because heaven cannot be set out of itself. Therefore these two ways it is set out to us, to bring us in love with it. 1. To our eye, it is represented under the types and similitudes of earthly things that are most glorious and delightful to the eyes, as gold, pearl, precious stones, cities, and what men of the world are most taken up with. 2. To our ear and faith, or apprehensions and conceptions, it is set out by the things that tast not to the men of the world, but to Gods People and Church have been more excellent than any thing of the world. So that as the former is not literally understood, so neither the latter; but by these, as by steps, he elevateth us some way to conceive of heaven. By the City, Tabernacle, Temple, Jerusalem and Promises, which were of a more taking beauty to them than any thing else; And it sheweth that heaven is not only above what worldly men can conceive, but even above the reach of these who have faith and experience in spiritual things.

Answerable to these, their positive happiness is first set out by the type of the tabernacle of God with men, that is, Gods presence shall be with them, as His Tabernacle was a sign of that, and a privilege to Israel, which others had not: So now what was signified by it, is here fully made out in truth. This, secondly, is cleared, He will dwell with them: They shall not only have signs, but as He dwelt in the Ark as the type, so shall He indeed dwell with men, nor as a stranger, now and then, as before, but constantly. 3. This is further expressed, They shall be His People, and God Himself shall be with them, (and not the tabernacle only) and He shall be their God: Which is not as if now God did begin to be their God (which to His own, was true in all ages) But, 1. that now God is manifestly known to be their God. 2. That now they reap fully the enjoyments and advantages of their right to have Him their God. 3. They get now the possession of Him, who in right and title was their portion before, they know what it is to have God their God, when He becometh all in all to them, and they are filled with His fulness, and see Him as He is. It saith, that the fruit and substance of that great Covenant-promise, I will be their God, and they shall be my People, is never well known, nor taken up, till they be in heaven, that being the place wherein the fulness of this promise streameth out to Believers. It is a word that setteth forth the height of happiness to be in the enjoying of God, the promise whereof is the great substance of the Covenant here, that is given to His People in these words, Lev. 26. 10, 11. and Ezek. 37. Gen. 17. 2 Cor. 6. 18.

There is more happiness in having God to be our God, than we can believe; yet this in right may be here, and the right improving and use-making of this, would in a great measure be heaven upon earth.

Vers. 4. The happiness of their estate (as it is free from all the contraries and opposits of blessedness, is set forth, 1. generally, in wiping away all tears. 2. More particular, in removing the causes of these, as death, sorrow, crying, &c. 3. In the proof of it; for, all former things are gone, therefore these are done away and the face of the Church and her condition is now new. Some of these expressions are (Chap. 7.) borrowed from the Prophets, that point at an excellent condition of the Church on earth, because the true beauty of the Church on earth is of the same nature with that in heaven, (as the former promises do clear) that beauty of heaven, is but that begun glory compleated and perfected, which is not at perfection here till it come there. But the scope differeth in this, that there the glory of the Gospel-church is holden forth principal-

ly after Antichrists begun ruine; but here the perfecting of the same Church in heaven after the final and full overturning of all enemies, as is clear before.

The general freedom of this happy condition, is, That God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: which is spoken not only comparatively with their former estate, as it is used by Isa. 60. (and possibly, Chap. 7.) but here it is simply to be understood. There shall not be in them or any of them then any sorrow, or cause of sorrow, or weeping; but though there be tears on their cheeks, all their journey over, (which is here supposed) yet when they come to the gates of heaven, no tear shall enter with them, God Himself, (as it were, with a napkin) by His tenderness to them and the fulness of His love, shall put an end to their weeping: there shall never be any more a tear amongst them all; and that it is God who wipeth, &c. addeth to the consolation.

More particularly, their freedom is set down in four things, ordinarily accompanying all living. 1. Death, there shall be no death there: which alludeth unto, or rather is the fulfilling of that, Isa. 25. (which 1 Cor. 15. the Apostle maketh clearly a qualification of heaven, and to be fulfilled after the Resurrection) There, and there only shall be immortality and eternal life, neither first nor second death enter there, but both are cast into the lake, as Chap. 20. or are without this city, to which this doth especially relate. 2. There is no sorrow nor grief there: it is properly such a sorrow as is for the loss of friends, or such a cross, when some good thing is taken away: there is none such there, no Wife in heaven bewails her Husband, or Mother her Child. Rachel will not weep for her children there, nor is friend separated from friend there, Jonathan is not heavy to sunder with David there, nor any man mourning for the loss of a Crown or Kingdom, or House or estate, or for any loss whatsoever. 3. There is no crying there, there are no violent or hasty surprisings (which taketh in all crosses that bring hurt upon any) there is no invading of Kingdoms, storming of Towns, killing or slaughter, or roaring of violent enemies actively doing wrong, or of poor souls crying out under and passively suffering wrongs or oppressions: neither of these are in heaven. 4. In that city there is no pain nor suffering, whether from external causes of violence, or inward infirmities of body or challenges of the mind; the inhabitants of that land will not say they are sick, Isa. 33. In a word, the body is so freed from corruption, as there is no external cause to hurt it, neither any internal tendency to any disease, but absolute freedom from all effects of sin; no sickness is there more than death; no gout nor gravel, all these are removed. And, for aggravation of this happiness, we are to understand these expressions set down, 1. As taking in all these things conducing to happiness. 2. Not only is there a removing of these, but the contrary privileges follow, to wit, quietness, life, comfort, joy, &c. 3. That these are eminently there in heaven, and only there in this degree. 4. That these enjoy this happiness and life eternally and unchangably; for now, no more death or pain or any thing of that kind, is to trouble them.

The confirmation is added in a word, for the former things are passed away, that is, all the former dispensations toward the Church, its crosses and sufferings and the manner of its fighting or being militant, these now are passed and changed: which must certainly be understood of the Churches final and eternal change, 1. because so these things (called the former in opposition to the Churches now glorified condition) are passed away as the old heavens are; then this change being universal in all things, relateth to the full change on the world. 2. Because these former things of death, pain, &c. are never away till the end: for if they were supposed contemporary with the estate of the Church during these thousand years, then certainly

certainly *Gog* and *Magog* are to follow that with death and crying, it must therefore be after all the Churches trials, and so after *Gog* and *Magog*, who not long precede the end of the world. So this renewing of all; maketh an excellent change to the godly: and no more can it be understood what the happiness of their lot is, than that which eye never saw, nor ear heard, nor yet could enter into mans heart to consider, This being every way new to men.

The second voice which cometh in to confirm the same things, is *ver. 3. of him that sat on the throne*, that is the Lamb, who was Judge, *Chap. 20.* stilled here by the name he taketh to himself, *Chap. 1.* to shew his God-head, *I am Alpha and Omega*, and *I will be his God*, *ver. 6.* and *7.* he is brought in speaking, 1. to confirm what is said: It is God who undertaketh it, and therefore it cannot mis; he may be believed. 2. To shew the greatness of the thing, and concernment of it, that God will himself be, as it were, the preacher of it. In this confirmation there are three several speeches to the same end. The 1. is, *ver. 3. Behold I make all things new*: wonder not at this glorious change; for (saith he) I that once made all things, now I make them new, new heavens, new earth and Church, &c. as to their qualifications: which *all things*, relate to the passing of the former things mentioned, *ver. 1.* and *4.* and *Chap. 20. 11.* and shew that the omnipotency and faithfulness of Jesus Christ is engaged for bringing this about for his Churches comfort, and strengthening of their faith in this great point.

The second word, for the same end, is, *write, for these things are true and faithful.* The command is repeated, to shew that there is a singular truth in this point, he might record it, and though (it be implied) men ordinarily look on these things as passing words, yet, saith he, they are faithful and true.

The third word is, *ver. 6.* The repeating this so often, *He said unto me*, is for wakening attention, and to mind us who it is that speaketh, and that every word, as a diverse sentence, is to be weighed. It hath two parts. The first is absolute, bearing out the certainty of the accomplishment of that great change, spoken of as if it were already done, *It is done* (saith he) that is, old things are passed, and all things are made new; what ever was before promised is certain, as done. This looketh to the end, as was cleared by the same word of the seventh vial, *Chap. 16.* which sheweth the contemporaneity of of these events, as was then cleared.

The second part of it, is conditional; holding forth the parties. (In their qualifications) who may expect that glory, *ver. 6.* and *7.* and these who have no right to this happiness; *ver. 8.* which is as an use of the former grounds; or is drawn (to stir up hearers to be in love with heaven) from the offer of it on this condition, and to scare men at hell, (in opposition to this) by threatening particular sorts with it. And therefore this offer is not to be looked on as to be made after this begun making of all things new, (as in order of time) but as holding forth the way how to come to this happiness (presently as to the offer, though the happiness be coming) and by the offer of it hereby to engage folks into it. This offer, as if pointeth out heaven as the result, so it pointeth out the way, means and motives leading and pressing to it at all times, as the close of the seven Epistles, (*Chap. 2.* and *3.*) doth. The offer beginneth with a description of him that maketh the offer, and beside that, hath two parts. The first part, *ver. 6.* the second *verse 7.*

He describeth himself as often in the first, second and third Chapters, *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.* This is to shew, 1. who it is that offereth; and that He may be trusted. 2. That he should not be slighted nor refused, duty tyeth to respect what he saith who now speaketh from heaven.

3. That as he is *Alpha* in the beginning, so now he appear-  
eth *Omega* in perfecting what he promised. Every part of the offer hath a promise of eternal life upon a condition, or to persons so and so qualified.

The thing promised, *ver. 6.* is, *I will give him of the fountain of the water of life.* This fountain is taken in Scripture sometimes for the graces of the Spirit that leads unto life and begins it, *John 4. 10.* and *7. 39.* Sometimes for the enjoyment of God, who is our life, as *Psal. 36. ver. 9.* with this is the fountain of life: both come well in here, but the last as the scope and great part of the promise, which hath its perfection in heaven. This is *water of life*, and that for the excellency and perpetuity of its refreshing; here is a perpetual fountain, whereas not one drop is in hell.

The condition runneth in the words, 1. *I will give him*; It is a free gift, so is life eternal, *Romans 6. 23.* 2. And it is given freely, that is, without any price, and compensation, but is obtained without money, and whatever qualification be in the person thus freely begared, it is no cause of this gift. Yet, 3. this is qualified, *It is to him that is a thirst*, that this gift is given, as *Isaiah 55. 1.* A thirst is, 1. one that needeth, 2. one that is sensible of his need, 3. one that would fain have, as ever a thirsty man would drink, as it were, pained for want of it. 4. It is one that will take and welcome the offer on any terms, and think himself much obliged to him that giveth it. Hence under thirsting, (*Isaiah 55. 1.* and *Matth. 5.* *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst*) is ordinarily holden forth peoples fitness to receive, and willingness to consent to Jesus Christ, as *Chap. 22. 17.* *whoever is a thirst*, that is, (as after followeth) *whoever will*, let him come, &c. by which we may see, 1. The freeness and largeness of Christs offer that cannot be made broader and laid nearer folks than by faith it is done in this, if they will receive and be willing, &c. they are welcome. 2. The fit and qualified objects that the promise is made to, poor, hungry, thirsty, that may not want, and yet have nothing to buy, Come here, the market is free. 3. The consistency, yea the necessary connexion of grace freely giving, and the qualifications of hunger and thirst in the receiver: for, 1. this qualification disposeth them to make use of grace. 2. To esteem of and prize grace, as sickness doth of him who is the Physician. This condition of faith, thirst, and willingness, &c. importeth no more, on the receivers side, any thing inconsistent with grace, than that it is said he giveth freely and without money on his side, this importing but a free receiving, as that doth a free giving.

The second promise is large, in two expressions, setting out this happiness, he *shall inherit all things*: he shall want no good thing, and these *all* shall be his possession, he shall have God, who (*1 Corin. chap. 15. ver. 28.*) shall be all in all, infinitely supplying and filling the room of all the riches, honour, contentments and comforts that men can imagine; it shall be a greater possession than if they enjoyed all things. For, 1. God equivalently maketh up all that nothing is missed. 2. Eminently and excellently he maketh up all, that what ever comfortable effect would be expressed from inheriting all things, it is much more excellently and eminently from God. This must be an excellent inheritance that is set out by such an expression, yet doth the thing enjoyed in heaven exceed the expression, as far as the maker doth his work, and that which is infinite exceedeth what is finite; for, expressions cannot be gotten adequate and suitable to the thing.

The second expression sheweth how this is made out, *I will be his God, and he shall be my son.* This comprehendeth all: yea, it is added as an addition to all things. It is more to be Gods son and to have him our God, than to enjoy all things beside to be his son, and so his heirs and joyn-heirs with Christ, *Rom. chap. 8. ver. 17.* What is that, or rather what is it not? here



now is a portion; who would cover, let them cover this as the best thing: One day the truth of this will appear, what great blessedness is here, when once his wrath is but a little kindled, *Psal. 2. ult.* "O let your hearts on this," it is the worst cure to possess and inherit all things, who in all the world ever reached to enjoy all the earth: yet that is little amongst all things, but a Believer inheriteth earth, heaven, God, Christ, glory, peace, his soul, even all things; for God is his (and with him all things, *1 Cor. 3. 22, 23*) and will he not give to him all things? *Rom. 8. 32.* yea, is he not himself all things (as is said) so that in heaven and earth the soul can wish no more, *Psal. 73. 25.* See on *ver. 3.*

The condition is *overcoming*, which implyeth, 1. a fight with a world of enemies and corruption. 2. A serious fight and constant war, as for life. 3. A difficult fight. Yet, 4. A victory and overcoming of all these enemies before there can be an obtaining of all things. This faith, folks will not slip nor sleep into these excellent promises, and though fighting be not the meritorious cause of these, yet it is the way to them and an antecedent going before them necessarily, though not the *causa sine qua non* to our justification, yet it is so to our glorification.

This *thirsting* importeth engaging and covenanting, *Isaiah 55. 3.* *Overcoming*, a being answerable to our engagements. Observe it then, and wrestle so as ye may obtain, seeing so much dependeth on it; and happy is he that overcometh. He and every one of them enjoyeth all things, and yet none of them enjoyeth anothers portion to one anothers prejudice. But as men now enjoy the whole Sun and its light, and wrongeth not others by it, so then all shall enjoy God fully, as to their capacities, yet so as there is no want to others. That infinite ocean of the Godhead being able to fill all the cups that come to it, or are casten to it, and being such that all may also swim in it when they are full, and that Sun of righteousness being so clear as to shine on all, and to make shining all the eyes that shall behold him.

The qualifications (to say so) of these excluded on the other part, are set down, *ver. 8.* and we conceive for these ends. 1. To press the receiving of the former offer from the ill of missing it, which is the main scope. 2. To shew that every one overcometh not, and so cometh not there. 3. To shew who overcometh not, to wit, these that ly under the practice of sinful lusts, as here: By these sorts understand all other sinful wretches lying in sin, as if they were expressed, the most abominable sorts whereof, are indeed named, yet not at all to exclude others. By it we may see also, that this must be heaven; for these that get not these good promises, are cast into the lake and second death. O what great odds is there between the end of sin and holiness! whatever men now think, it will one day, yea in that day, appear in its native colours.

These particular steps or sorts of sins (to wit eight) are mentioned, to shew, 1. That there is but one way to glory, but many sins whereby men pass to destruction. 2. That by the setting down of these more particularly, the happiness of heaven and the qualifications of these who enter it, may be the more conspicuous, being put together.

The first sort of sinners that is excluded, is the *fearful*, or coward, opposit to the former fighter and overcomer. It is not these who are feared to come short, *Heb. 4. 1.* nor these that fear to sin and desire to prevent it, *Heb. 11. 7.* nor such that fear that their faith be not good, or that they be presuming, as the woman, *Mark 5. and 33.* But such as, 1. dare act nothing for Christ, are cowards and not valiant for him, though not directly against him, such as fearing them that can kill the body, *Matth. 10.* sway with every corrupt time, as the beast, *Magog, &c.* and cannot fight against them to any hazard, but forsake Christ. 2. Such as are feared to fight against lusts,

and never appear against them in the field: the weak heart (*Ezek. 16.*) is evil, such a fear as the evil servant had, *Mat. 25. 25.* which maketh men lizzie in holy duties and trading for Christ, as if they were afraid of them; the sluggish faith there is a lion in the way, this is he who slithereth away. 3. Such as dare venture to suffer nothing for Christ, as the worthies did, *Hebrews chap. 11.*

The second sort is *unbelievers*, not properly, or only infidels, much less these who are of a weak or little faith, that is, mixed with doubting, and want peace: but such as never received the free offer of Christs Grace indeed, whatever their profession was; that never did flee from the Covenant of works, to rest on Christ for salvation. These are (*John 3. 36.*) condemned already; and this unbelief shall condemn as much as any breach of the Law, in that day it will condemn that ye believe not according to that command, *1 John 3. 23.* as to be a murderer, to be a witch or a warlock. *Quest.* How differeth it from weak faith? *Ans.* Weak faith hath a sure ground, but a weak grip of it: therefore it is feared for it. But unbelief hath a weak ground, but thinketh its grip sure, therefore it is not troubled. 2. Weak faith hath much fear of unbelief, *Mark 9. 24.* and would be rid of it: this unbelief is willingly, and so wrestleth not against unbelief, but against doubting and fear, lest its security be marred. 3. Weak faith is clear of its own need and Christs fulness; but its weakness is in its peace, or its gripping of him, or byding by him: and as to the fruits of faith, it findeth these weak, (to say so,) but unbelief is clearer of its peace than of its need, &c. and whether we take unbelief as a falling on the right hand by presumption, or on the left by despair, both are unbelief, and opposit to faith in Christ, and are excluded here.

The third sort are *abominable*, who by sins against nature have made themselves vile, now these are reckoned with: such were these in *Sodom*, and these, *Rom. 1. 26, &c.*

The fourth sort are *murderers*: which taketh in all who wrong their neighbours in thought, word or deed, especially the persecuters of his people.

The fifth sort are *whoremongers*: whereby all who are given to any filthiness, secret or open, of whatsoever sort, are understood, if it were but in a look.

The sixth sort are *forcers*, such as more directly renounce God, and take them directly or indirectly to the making use of the devil in the place of God: whereby we may see, that there is such a sin, as well as there is murder and adultery.

The seventh sort are *idolaters*, whether against the first command; as heathens; or the second, as false worshippers, or more subtilly advancing creatures, as do the covetous. They are in this roll.

The eighth sort are all *liars*, in their words or carriage counterfeiting in hypocrisy towards God, as *Psal. 78. 35.* or deceiving or dissembling towards man, *Coloss. 3. 10.* all go together to the lake, spoken of, *Chap. 20.* that is their lot in opposition to the lot of the Elect here described: under these sorts, all are comprehended who live and die in sin: as, 1. Those sins of omissions in falling or byding back, as the fearful. 2. Against the Gospel, as the unbelievers. 3. Against nature, as the abominable. 4. Against the Law, as the others, and that whether against the first or second Table, in deed or word. Their lot is dreadful; *They are casten in the lake, &c.* Then 1. Is there not great odds between heaven and hell? Is it not good to be in heaven and ill to be in hell? 2. Must not all of you be eternally in the one or in the other? 3. Is it not also certain that folks must go to them severally according to these qualifications of overcoming, or of lying under sin; and that these are not separated, but heaven and holiness, hell and sin go together? Then, what are the most of you doing? Are not these the words of him that sitteth on the throne?

why

why then make ye not for heaven, and so for more holiness as necessary to be there? have ye resolved to dispense with the loss of heaven? Can ye abide hell and the company of devils for ever? what, is there any choice here? why halt ye between heaven and hell, as if there were any equality betwixt *all things* and *nothing* (no, not a drop of water) betwixt God with all good, and the devil and all sorrow, and that for ever? O the screechs and yells that will be in hell, whereas there is no cry in heaven! Can ye go about doubting what to choose here? Why then is there so little faith, so little wrestling and holiness? Know ye not what dependeth on the event, and can ye abide to lose it, yea, to hazard it, or to be secure while it is so? How can ye sleep and eat your bread without sorrow? what promise can ye comfort your selves in? None speaketh good to you, what threatening can ye shift, while ye shift holiness? do not all speak as pronouncing your external excommunication from God, while ye abide under the curse as ye are? what example have ye of any that ever hardened themselves and prospered, or lived and died under the dominion of sin and was happy? Is not hell full of refutations of this untruth? Where

are many, like the rich glutton, *Luk. 16.* that would suffer no application of hell to them in their life, and now they are sure of it, and bid tell it to others, knowing that men ordinarily believe it not? O secure atheist, proud sinner that never thirsted for righteousness, nor felt the ill of sin, or thou lazy negligent wrestler that art afraid to fight, what will come of thee? Do ye not believe that a reckoning is coming? do ye not see that holiness and happiness go together, and sin and shame? do not ye your selves think it reasonable and just that they should go linked together, and that none but the holy should go to heaven? What will it turn to then? shall any other door be opened to heaven, or other promises be made to you, than for others? Remember what certification accompanieth this offer. It is indeed free (so we offer it in His Name) *Ho, every one, come, &c.* But here is the certification, if ye come not, and fight not seriously so as to overcome, and if ye turn back or fight not for Christ, but like a coward desert Him, here is your doom, we pronounce it, to be cast into the lake of fire: for, who, in this respect, is not with Christ, is against Him, and all His enemies shall be slain before Him.

## LECTURE III.

*Verf. 9. And there came unto me one of the seven angels, which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the Bride, the Lambs wife.*

*10. And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,*

*11. Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as chrystal,*

*12. And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve Angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.*

*13. On the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates.*

*14. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb.*

*15. And he that talked with me, had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.*

*16. And the city lyeth four-square, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs: the length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal.*

*17. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the Angel.*

*18. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper, and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.*

*19. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was of jasper, the second saphir, the third a chalcedonie, the fourth an emerald,*

*20. The fifth a sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth a topaz, the tenth a chrysophrasus, the eleventh a jacinth, the twelfth an amethyst.*

*21. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, every several gate was one pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.*

*22. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple of it.*

*23. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.*



24. And the Nations of them which are saved, shall walk in the light of it : and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

25. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day : for there shall be no night there.

26. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

27. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie : but they which are written in the Lambs book of life.

**W**E have heard the more general description of the Saints eternal happiness : Followeth, to ver. 6. of Chap. 22. a particular description thereof to John by vision. Wherein, 1. some preparatory circumstances are mentioned. Then, 2. in it self it is described, to ver. 21. Then, 3. some aggravations or commendations of that happiness, whereby it is illustrated, are set down.

The first preparatory circumstance, is, That one of the Angels came to John : whereby the instrument revealing is set down. It is like that same mentioned, Chap. 17. 1. yet it followeth not from this (as was said) that therefore it belongeth to the militant Church : for, an Angel generally is made use of, to shew the revelation to John, Chap. 1. and Chap. 22. 6. and so the revealing of this part of it, will but agree to that mediate manner of Christs revealing to John the state of the triumphant as of the militant Church, but no more. And if it be the last of the Angels of the vials, it will but shew that this glorified state of the Church doth succeed that, whereunto that last vial did make way. The Angel cometh : It is like (by Gods immediate speaking) there hath been some diversion in the former words, or otherwise.

The second circumstance is ver. 9. to wit, his call to John, to come see the Bride, as he had made him see the whore, Chap. 17. Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lambs wife. Here Bride (*Sponsa*) and Wife (*uxor*) are put together (she being now brought as Queen together to the King, *Psal.* 45. where-as Chap. 19. she was but Bride : and though the word *yvyn*, both there and here, be rendred wife ; yet here being contradistinguished from Bride, it necessarily is interpreted so, where-as there, Chap. 19. it is spoken of as a marriage to be but solemnized. John saw a glance, ver. 2. but here more particularly he is called to it, to shew that heaven and happiness are not seen at a short view, and that men would dwell on the sight of them. That she is the Lambs wife, is not the least part of her commendation, when all the Elect are gathered, that is, the Queen, *Psal.* 45. and the Church, *Job.* 3. 29. *Eph.* 5. 29. which really is so ; for, it is more improperly that visible Churches are called *Hu* Bride, seeing that the marriage is founded on an invisible relation and tie and union with Christ.

The third circumstance is the manner how John saw, He carried me in the Spirit, whereof we heard, Chap. 2. 17. It is not really, but in extasie.

4. The place where he saw, is, on an high mountain : borrowed from this, that men see more and further there than in valleys (but in vision it is not so) It sheweth only this, that there needeth an ascending, and that in the Spirit before heaven can well be discerned or conceived.

A fifth is, that generally he shewed him the great City, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. There is some difference made between a city and a town ; *urbs*, a town, looketh especially to the walls, buildings or habitations ; *civitas*, respecteth the indwellers and their priviledges in a common way : we take in both here. The town, for that particular description, to ver. 22. agreeth well to this ; the inhabitants also, for, by beholding this town or city, John seeth the Bride the Lambs wife who are the inhabitants : and that both are comprehended (the one as the place, and the other as these that

dwell in it) it is clear from ver. 27. where they are distinguished : as also (ver. 14. Chap. 22.) where the Elect are distinguished from the City wherein they enter, and also from the happiness they enjoy in it, when entered. Neither is that inconsistent, that one type should have a twofold or composed meaning, especially tending to one scope, as Chap. 17. the seven heads signifie both Hills and Kings. This is a great City ; for, 1. It hath many inhabitants and a large circuit, all the first born are in it. 2. For dignity, it is the City of the great King. Again, it is called the holy Jerusalem, as different from what it was before ; its gloriousness and greatness is much in holiness. Its descending is spoken of before : its like that in vision it was represented as descending ; for, Paul was taken up to see it, 2 Corinth. 12. It is letten down to John. It is clear from the following words, ver. 11. having the glory of God : (I take it for a general commendation before he enter on particulars) that is, it had most excellent glory, even glory whereof God is the author, He having prepared this glory for His Bride, and provided this adorning for her : by which the reason appeareth wherefore it is said to come down from Him.

In the particular description, we conceive it not so edifying to speak of the nature and properties of these stones, or of the number of twelve, used for and spoken of the gates, foundations and fruits of the tree, Chap. 22. (neither can we reach any thing solid or certain from these mysteriously considered) we take the scope to aim together to set out the glory of the Elect in heaven, which under figurative tearms is set out from many things, because no one thing doth reach the scope, and not as if one thing were understood by this stone, another by that ; but all together shew, that it is most glorious and rich, as if made up of the most costly rare stones, and that in the greatest abundance.

This happiness agreeing to this heavenly City, is set out several ways, with all these things, in an eminent measure and manner, whereby men account a city adorned : as, 1. for light, which is not that which enlighteneth her, or whereby possibly she is enlightened, (for that is not the Sun, but God, &c. as afterward appearet) but her shining actively whereby she holdeth forth light, (as *Matth.* 5. Let your light shine, &c.) her splendor and beauty and the glance of her glory, often compared to light, and agreeing well with that word, the glory of God, going before ; which (Chap. 4.) was compared to this same jasper. This expresseth her general lustre, as one newly entering a stately town. First, the whole nearness and splendour of it, representeth it self to him, before he come particularly to take notice of the parts of it. That word, clear as chrystal, is added to shew its nature ; It is glorious and pure as shining chrystal, yet precious and firm as the jasper, which was a most excellent gem, and used in Aarons breast-plate, *Exod.* 28 : This splendour in general resulteth from all the ornaments thereof put together.

In the more particular commendation, we may consider, 1. The principal parts commended, which are usually most eminent in a stately city : as, 1. its walls, 2. its gates, 3. its foundations, 4. its streets, how they are paved. Consider, 2. the proportionable disposing of its parts in an excellent and suitable mould and quantity. 3. Consider the several commendations which these parts get. Here indeed eminently the walls are salvation, and the gates *traile*. *Isa.* 60.

*Verf. 12, 13.* The first part commended, is the *wall, great and high*: Walls are for security. Difference is put betwixt *Murus* an house-wall, and *Menia* fortifications. This by its greatness and height doth set forth the last, to wit, the strength and security of this city; no army nor enemy can make incursion on it, so that the inhabitants may not only be (*securi*) secure as *Laiſh* was secure, but (*tuti*) safe, (which two words in that respect do differ) here entereth no enemy, but all are friends. It is a Kingdom that cannot be shaken.

2. There is the *gates* or ports, which are in number *twelve*, and have the names of the tribes of *Israel* written on them: which is to signifie, that though there be no access over the walls to enemies, yet there are ports sufficient to let in all friends, such as only true *Israelites* are. Therefore they are twelve, to shew they are sufficient; And the writing of the names of the tribes, saith, they are appointed only for *Israelites*, and that for all *Israelites*, which are (*ver. 27.*) all that are written in the book of life, of whatsoever stock; but no *Jebusite* nor *Canaanite* entrench this strong hold. This *Jerusalem* (or, *sight of peace*) is only for the children of the promise, born to *Abraham* saith, and partakers of his blessing; and for this end are *twelve Angels at the gates*, as porters or guards, keeping watch, that none passe to trouble these within. There is such excellent order and safety in heaven, there is no garison-town like it: which (as other things) may be alluded unto here.

There are twelve gates (and three of them on each quarter:) which ye conceive belong to the proportionable mould of it, as it suiteth with the end, to let in all alike easily on all quarters (as the Tabernacle marched in the midst of the Tribes on all quarters, so there is access unto heaven from all airts alike) and we seek no further mystery in it; but it is proportionable, that such a large city should have many gates, and that there should be three to each wind, seeing, it is four-square. So it denoteth the regular exactness and Architecture of this city, whose builder and maker is God in a singular way.

Followeth, (*ver. 14.*) the foundations: more excellent than that of *Solomons* Temple of cedar-wood and stone. It hath *twelve foundations*: this signifieth the durableness and eternity of that city, that no time can make it decay, more than any enemy can storm it; it is well founded, not having one foundation only, but twelve for its security.

A word is added to the foundations (as formerly to the gates) the names of the *Lamb's twelve Apostles* are written on them. By *twelve*, is understood all: in a word, here their Doctrine which they preached is meant, (as *Eph. 2. 20.* where the Church is built on the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles) which Word endureth for ever, *1 Pet. 1. 25.* and so Gods faithfulness sustaineth heaven that it is never moved, but endureth to all eternity, according to that Word and Gospel which was preached through the world by all the Apostles: yea, the Prophets and Ministers of Christ; But the Apostles, for honours sake, are mentioned for all. And this is not inconsistent with heaven to have their names on the foundation, seeing they are not the foundations themselves, but the faithfulness of God in the preached Gospel shall be more manifest then nor now; and His Ministers in that *Jerusalem* shall have a special dignity, as founders or builders use to have their names graven on the walls for their honour.

He descendeth more particularly, (*ver. 15.*) to shew the proportionableness and exactness of this city which every way is exceeding regular, as the engine of a most excellent Contriver or Plotter can invent or Artificer can form. 1. The purpose of measuring the city, wall and gates indicated. 2. The measurer described, *He that talked with him.* 3. The instrument wherewith he measured, *A golden reed*: all is borrowed in general from that type of *Ezek.* when he is measuring out a

Gospel-church, and from Gods care (*Chap. 17.*) of His little Church then. But here this exceedeth these, It is a *golden reed*; for, all is excellent here: It is but a simple reed in *Ezek.* and this city, when it is measured, exceedeth that far in quantity, and quality, and so are not one way to be applied.

What is found by measuring? The city (*ver. 16.*) lieth *four-square*, just alwayes alike (so proportionable and strong as fort-royal use yet to be built) that is, most fit to receive in on all quarters. 2. It is found that the city is twelve thousand furlongs either all square, as it seemeth by putting breadth and length and height (that is, the height of its towers) in one certain measure, which can be none other but that measuring immediately preceeding. Or, it is so much in circuit: however, it is a great city, and hereby its capacity in bounds and multitude of inhabitants, is holden forth with its excellent frame.

*Verf. 17.* The wall is found to be one hundred forty and four cubits, that is, its height and breadth is even above that of old *Babylon* or *Niniveh*: the particular cubit is set down, for there were diverse, one of the Sanctuary which was large; one common, which is that of a man, from the elbow down, the Angel appearing as a man, and so went about this with such a measure, or cubit, as men use to make up a reckoning known to them, (and by this we may expound the number of a man, *Chap. 13.*) It is as if *John* said, the Angel measured by the same measure, and according to the same rule used among men. By all which, that excellent skill in framing heaven, and that regularity and wisdom, which was shewn by God when He made it above any other piece of His work, is holden forth, that though there be exactness in the Church here, much more there. In a word, no fault can be found with any part of it, all is well ordered and contrived, and can abide most exact trial. This is the scope, and further we descend not.

Followeth thirdly from *ver. 18.* the particular commendations of these parts. 1. The wall (*i. e.* the out-wall circuiting all) is of *jasper*, most precious and beautiful. See *Chap. 4.* and all the city, that is, the town or walls within, they are all of *pure gold* for stones; and not common gold, but *clear as glasse* for shining, and firm and solid as gold, and precious also. These are excellent walls and houses that are not gilded, but of gold. This for outward and inward buildings.

2. The foundations are commended: they are not common stones, but of *precious stones of all sorts in abundance*. They are particularly reckoned to be twelve, *ver. 19, 20.* We know not the nature of them, therefore cannot seek mysteries in them: Only, by what is said of them in Scripture, and the adorning of *Aarons* breast-plate, *Exod. 28.* we may gather that they were most precious: All Believers here in beauty exceed *Solomon*, yea, *Aaron* in his finest robes.

3. The gates were each of one pearl, *ver. 21.* a rare thing, a good merchant may sell all for one of these, *Mat. 13.* and that each gate is but one pearl, is more than if many gates were made up of moe.

4. The streets (*ver. 21.*) or causeys were not dirtied, but are as *pure gold as transparent glasse* for clearness, such as the world hath not, yet is it short to set out the least thing that Saints have there to tread upon. This is an excellent city, when gold, and such fine gold, is made use of to pave its streets. There are no foul steps there, no foul prints sticking to Believers heels that dwell there, which is the scope of it. This is a golden city, golden walls, golden houses, golden streets, who love gold may be enriched here: yet there are some aggravations added, the more to set out the glorious happiness thereof: six or seven are in this chapter, and as many in the beginning of the next, which are additionals to the happiness of that city, or of those who are in it, and heightning their happiness.

The first, is, *ver. 22.* there is no temple there: which looketh not only to ceremonial worship which was under the Law, but



to prefer it to the most glorious estate of the militant Church, which, under the seventh trumpet, (*Chap. 11. ult.*) consisted much in this, that the temple was opened, whereas it is not so in this: for here is no temple, that is, no mediate serving of God, or access to Him, or use of Ordinances, all these are done away, which is clear by the opposition, *The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb, are the temple of it*; that is, the immediate enjoying of God and Jesus Christ supplyeth all, Saints now made perfect being admitted to a full satisfying sight of Him, as He is, *Chap. 22. ver. 4.* which (*1 Cor. 13.*) is the happiness of heaven: for, God himself is opposed here, not only to the ceremonial worship, but to all mediate wayes of seeing Him, or approaching to Him in Ordinances any manner of way. All these, and whatsoever is not God himself, is laid by. Neither is there need of these in that palace above.

The second aggregating priviledge, is, *ver. 23.* that there is no need of the sun or moon there; no created light in it, the glory of God, &c. and the Lamb is the light thereof. There is no created thing, no not the sun, but God Himself (as the opposition sheweth) that is the comfort of heaven. These are not needed nor missed, but God is all. This setteth forth, 1. Whereas light is a glorious creature, and so is the sun, yet that here there is no need of it: for, there is a more glorious light that would darken the sun, as the sun doth now a petty candle. 2. That that light cometh from the resplendent glory of God in that higher house, which is far beyond what creatures can imagine, though there be so many stones that are precious there, yea, so many Angels and Saints whose countenance shall shine as that sun which we now see, yet that is not its light, but the glory of God and the Lamb is the light thereof. If any ask, how God, that is a pure spirit, can be its light? We answer, It is not so to be understood as if adequately He were taken up by glorified creatures, they being still finite. But, 1. that they have a true beholding of His infinite Essence in their elevated capacities according to their measure: for, this light is merely intellectual; whereof more, *Chap. 22. 4.* 2. That there is a shining glory there manifested (as it were a view of His back-parts, as was to Moses, *Exod. 34.* that made him shine) which exceedeth all the glory that can be imagined, that being purposely letten out to make Him known, as in measure, beyond any glorious appearance on earth. 3. The shining brightness of the Godhead indwelling in our blessed Lord Jesus shall be in a supereminent degree discernable, a little glance whereof was in the transfiguration, *Mat. 17.* This shall take up and satisfy all eyes in heaven, even the glory of that person who is God, it shall be beyond and beside all, like the sun in the noon-day beside the stars, when they appear in day-light, which scarcely or not at all are then discernable: And though the like phrase in a great part be used, *Isa. 60. 19, 20.* yet it differeth much, not only in the scope, that being to set out the beauty of the militant Church, which is spiritual, This is that which is eternal: But also, 1. there is night and day, here is no night; 2. There is a sun, but it goeth not down; here is none, nor need of one. 3. There is no word of the Lamb; here there is: Yet these expressions whereby the Churches beauty is set out, are alluded to here, as is said, to shew not only that heaven is above gold, pearls, &c. but above what the Church can here attain unto.

The third aggravation is that, *ver. 24.* It shall be the happiness of all that shall be happy, therefore cannot be but glorious, for the nations of them that are saved shall walk in that light. 1. There are many that shall partake of it. 2. They who are saved shall be admitted, and they shall account it happiness to share of that light, and it must be an excellent City, which is allowed for the walk and comfort of all that ever shall be saved; when they are saved they are brought here, which proveth it strongly to be heaven; yea, if they were Kings that are saved, they shall bring their glory to it, that is, 1. forsake all glory of

Crowns and Kingdoms in comparison of it, it shall so far exceed their glory. Or, 2. as if all Kings set themselves to make one place, or city, glorious, and therefore should make all their glory to meet and further this one design; so this shall be even exceeding all, having all in it, and wanting nothing that can be for its glory, as if all things glorious had trysted in it.

4. Its gates are not shut by day, for there is no night there: that is, no interruption of that happiness, no vicissitude of day and night, no fear to make the gates to be shut, there is but one eternal day which shall never end, *ver. 25.* there is no fear from Antichrist, nor Gog or Magog here.

A fifth aggravation, is, *ver. 26.* that not only what is glorious to Kings, but what in all the world is glorious, shall be brought there, as if all glory and riches made their rendezvous here, it shall be so glorious as if no glory at all were out of it. Beside, it may well take in, that all the Saints, (which only are the glory of Nations) are all brought in to it. In a word, it shall exceed all, as it were, they will cast their caps at it.

The sixth is from its indwellers, who are expressed two wayes, 1. negatively. No unclean thing or what defileth, &c. shall enter, *v. 27.* that is, no wicked person, 2. no wicked thing or no wicked deed, 3. no filthy creature that is loathsome, 4. no corruption in Believers, they are now without spot. In a word, 1. no sin, 2. no curse, 3. no devil, tempter or temptation and no corruption, for, all these defile, and this is more than that only no wicked person should enter. Thus it is expressly distinguished from the militant Church, that is hereby supposed to have in it what defileth, to wit, scandalous persons and hypocrites, here expressed in these two, *who work abomination and make a lie*: and it is said of all these, that in no wayes they enter, by a twofold negation in the Original *οὐ μὴ*, to shew the absolute exclusion of all these, and that in the least degree. Then positively it is told who enters, None but these who are written in the Lambs book of life, i. e. true Elect, and not appearing so only; yea regenerated, perfected Elect, as was cleared in the scope of this Chapter, (otherwise the Elect have corruption that defileth, but here now it is done away) for, 1. that phrase, writing in his book, through this prophesie is never so understood, to wit, for these that appear so, but for such who are so indeed. 2. Seeming Elect, who yet are not so, do make a lie and defile, therefore are here excluded. 3. These written are opposed (*ut supra*) to these not written, *Chap. 20. 15.* and therefore it must be understood of true Elect, seeing the others are really reprobates. 4. The Lambs book of life is never opened till the last day, and this admission supponeth the opening of it, as that which only giveth the rule to make this difference, supponing that till this Book be opened, no such discerning should be pretended unto, therefore it is not here-away. 5. He hath kepted that Book to Himself, and hath given it to none to rule their sentence by. 6. Do not some hypocrites look liker Elect than some of them do? and shall this rule exclude the one and take in the other, and seeing the mentioning of the book of life here relateth to its opening, *Chap. 20.* whereby it is made known who was in it, and that is at the last sentence, This must therefore be at the execution thereof, and posterior to it.

These reasons do evince, that the book of life is to be taken properly for Gods election, in opposition to what was said, *Chap. 20. v. last*, and therefore these who enter now must be really and only Elect indeed, opposit to the former; and no other interpretation, crossing that, can be admitted either of secluding profane men, and such who are not Elect doctrinally from heaven itself, or such who appear not so, from the Church: for, 1. thus to be written here in the book of life, is to be really elected, in opposition to the state of the reprobate who are not written; for, all men are distributed in these two, *written or not written*, and a third there is not; but to expound this either of the former wayes, will not make it to speak of the real Elect

and these only, Therefore it cannot be admitted here. 2. Whatever this here intendeth, it is something that both *de jure* and *de facto* is peculiar to this state of the Church, that is, it is such a thing as neither ever was, in deed or event, nor was ever called for before this; for, this is a thing peculiarly differing this state of the Church from all that ever preceeded in this respect, and for that end, as a peculiar property thereof, is subjoyned here; But, neither can it be said, that the key of Doctrine, *de jure*, becometh straiter then nor now, or that *de facto* it will ever be stricter than it was in the first Primitive

and Apostolick times, nor can it be applied to any more strict exercise of Discipline in reference to Church-membership: for then, 1. it would follow, that there were a different rule for gathering of Churches then, which we have not now, and that so much strictness were not required now, which some will not find consonant to the purpose for which they allege this now. And, 2. it would follow, that the Apostolick Church was not so exact in their practice, if *de facto* that succeeding Church shall go beyond them; It must therefore belong to the Church-triumphant, as is said.

# LECTURE I.

## CHAP. XXII.

Verf. 1. **A**ND he shewed me a pure river of water of life clear as chrystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb.

2. In the midst of the street of it, and of either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every moneth: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the Nations.

3. And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him.

4. And they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads.

5. And there shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.



His first part of the Chapter, to *vers.* 6. continueth some further aggravations of the happiness which the glorified in heaven enjoy. The first is from the excellency of a river that runneth through that city; rivers are pleasant and profitable to run through cities. This city hath an excellent river: whereof we may say, as *Psal.* 46. *The streams thereof make glad the city of God.* It is commended, 1. that it is a river (not a brook) but such as may convey commodities to it, and be useful for cleansing of it, which sheweth in the scope that this city is perfectly accommodated and cleansed exceedingly, beyond what any river can do to any city on earth. 2. It is a pure river, that is, free from all muddiness and corruption; every thing is excellent here, the finest that can be imagined. 3. It is a river of water of life, not only as from a living fountain, but as of a lively efficacy and vertue to all who drink of it; life is in abundance here, where both the fountains and river are such. 4. It is clear as chrystal, so pure and pleasant, no river here is like it. 5. It proceedeth from the throne of God, and of the Lamb: that is its excellency, God is the fountain thereof immediately; It is not from the Temple, as *Ezek.* 47. which cometh by Ordinances, but from the Throne, a streaming of consolation from God and Jesus Christ. The consolations and effects of the Spirit in this life are compared to waters and rivers of waters of life, *Joh.* 7. 38. which maketh some apply this to the holy Spirit, which proceedeth from the Father and the Son. The general is a truth (and suiteth with the scope here) that Believers in heaven shall be

well refreshed and satisfied, and that with such consolations as proceed from Father, Son and Spirit, although we insist not in the particular application; Christ the Lamb is still joyned with God, because the enjoying of the God-man is still looked on as a great part of our happiness.

The second thing mentioned, is the tree of life, *vers.* 2. which doth exceedingly adorn and enrich this city. It alludeth in general to *Gen.* 2. where the tree of life was in Paradise, a Sacrament of immortality to Adam if he had stood; but this is a tree of life, not only as confirming their unchangeable state of happiness who are in heaven, but of its own efficacy able to bring forth life eternal, and to continue it in these that eat of its fruit; and so it differeth from all food (even Manna) that men eat of here; This is an excellent tree. It is further set out from its place, it is in the midst of the street of the city, a special ornament of the market place. Heavenly happiness is meant by this tree that groweth in the midst of the Paradise of God, *Chap.* 2. 7. and *Chap.* 22. 14. which maketh that we need not be anxious about particular application of the several parts. 2. It is commended, that it groweth on either side of the river; there is but one tree, yet of that proportion and extent, that its branches extend to both sides, and the fruit is in every place to be found; which is a singular thing, here only mentioned to shew, that though there be a river in the city, yet by it none are divided from the fruit of that tree, it furnisheth alike easily all, who have all alike access to it. 3. It bare twelve manner of fruits, that is, variety of all sorts of consolation: though it be but one tree, yet it is an Orchard for variety and satisfaction. 4. It yieldeth fruit every



*very month*, it is so fertile for abundance; it is ever harvest here, alway there is fruit on this tree. 5. Its *leaves* are medicinal, as the fruits are pleasant, They are for the healing of the nations: there is neither need of gold nor water, nor fruit in heaven, more than medicine; but all are mentioned, to set forth that happiness where there is neither mortality nor death (the tree of life preventeth these) nor sickness, there is so good medicine in these leaves, that who live under its shadow, are perfectly whole by the efficacy thereof. So all the scope is rather to shew the effect that is there, to wit, perfect health and happiness, than to pitch on any particular mean of applying or bringing out these. Though if Christ Jesus be meant here by this tree, as is like it is not impertinently applied to Him, seeing He now, being in heaven, hath this efficacy on the Nations before they come there, He who healeth the Nations shall be enjoyed in heaven; so it commendeth heaven to us the more, because Christ our Physician is there.

There are three aggravations added, *ver. 3.* The first is, *there is no more curse*, that is, there is no more effect of sin nor wrath, no cursed thing nor cursed person, but all are fully happy; and whatever followed sin, is shut out there: but the throne of God and the Lamb is there, the curse was especially in separating from God, now by Gods constant dwelling in that city amongst these blessed Saints, all the curse is taken away (for they are inconsistent together) that is, His glorious presence, as on His throne in stately Majesty, opposite to His manner of appearing on earth, which is Gods footstool, whereas heaven is His throne. The third here is, *And his servants shall serve him*: His servants, (that is, their servants, i. e. to Him and the Lamb) and Him, are here put in the singular number, to shew the unity of the Father and the Son, though it relateth to both. The privilege here is, that these His servants, Saints glorified shall have a place amongst these that stand by, *Zech. 3.* It supponeth, 1. an access to his company, such as Angels have, who are alwayes waiting on Him and behold His face, *Matth. 18.* This is a privilege that others, who are not servants, have not. 2. It supposeth a relation to Him, and that an honourable relation; to be Gods servants, is more than to be Kings servants; yea, Kings, so David and Moses stile themselves, *Psal. 18.* and *90. 1.* 3. It supposeth an exactness and fitness in them to go about these duties of servants cheerfully, These who here devoted themselves to Him and engaged themselves to be His servants, though they performed little, yet there they shall serve Him and perform it as becometh. It is the Saints prayer here, *Matth. 6.* that they may do Gods will on earth as in heaven; and what happiness would they think it to be some length in that? Now, in heaven that is perfected, and without declining or defect they go about it; and certainly if it was a happiness to be Solomons servant and a great honour, much more to serve God and the Lamb. There is more happiness in active doing of holy duties, than we are awar of.

We have heard of five aggravations of this heavenly happiness, other two do follow, *ver. 4.* The first is, *They shall see his face*. It is usual by this to set out the happiness of heaven, as *Matth. 5. 8.* *Heb. 12. 14.* *1 Cor. 13. 1.* *Joh. 3. 2.* His face here is mentioned, to shew that that enjoyment shall be most immediate and intimate; and so it is opposite to what is attainable here, seeing at most, Moses got but a sight of His back parts. This is particularly marked, to shew wherein their happiness in heaven consisteth, it is in the immediate enjoying of God, who then shall be all in all: The second is, *and his name shall be in their foreheads*, they shall look like Him (so we understand it) that they shall be transformed into the same image perfectly, *1 Cor. 3. ult.* and *1 Joh. 3. 2.* they shall partake of His likeness, as He prayeth, *Joh. 17. 26.* and our vile

bodies shall be made like his glorious body, *Phil. 3. ult.* proportionably as becometh members to their Head. Then shall Believers bear his name in their foreheads, and it shall be known to whom they belong by the excellent privileges bestowed on them.

Their happiness is further set out, *ver. 5.* in four things, 1. that there shall be no intermission of that happy day, *No night is there*, no vicissitude or change, but an unchangeable day, they are above the ups and downs which all the three principal prophecies are obnoxious unto. 2. *They need no candle*, no borrowed or artificial light; darkness is removed, and that which was in part, is done away, *1 Cor. 13.* and that which is perfect is come, and knowledge is at an height and perfection; so that though there be candles or Sun and Moon here (and they are needful) yet not so there. 3. *The Lord giveth them light*, they have light and immediately from God Himself, without all intervening means, then shall there be no mistake of God, but in that day we shall know that the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father. 4. *They reign, and that for ever and ever*, not for a thousand years but eternally, in which respect it is certainly opposed to the former, *Chap. 20.* And this of eternity is added as of special use in their happiness; for, if it were wanting, all their other happiness would be defective. O happy Kingdom and State that cannot be altered! there is no wavering to say that it is good to be here, Kingdoms on earth have their periods, but this hath none but endless eternity.

To be in heaven must be a great happiness, there is no life to that, with all the properties of uncontroverted happiness.

2. To be Gods servants must be a great happiness, it is reckoned one in heaven.

3. Be comforted, O believers, in the hope of heaven, and holily long to be there; there is no night nor corruption there, the heart is stayed there, His servants serve Him without gadding or wearying; and be the more holily submissive: for, that endeth all complaints, and fully putteth out the life of the body of death.

We may answer two questions by assertions from these words, in short, which will further clear them.

*Quest. 1.* Do the glorified behold God Himself? how can that be, seeing He is invisible?

*Ans.* They see not his Essence by their bodily eyes; for, He is a Spirit.

2. By their understanding they see not his Essence adequately or perfectly as it is; for he is infinit, and they even then but finit, and therefore they comprehend him not.

Yet, 3. beside what evidences of his glory are seen by created light or splendor about him (as there is much of that) or what shineth in the man Christ Jesus, who is unconceivably glorious, there is a real immediate conceiving and taking up of God, though not fully comprehensive of Him, or adequately unto Him; because seeing there, is opposite to faith and our manner of seeing here. And these phrases, *we shall see Him as He is*, *See His face*; *Know Him as we are known of Him*, &c. confirm it.

Beside, every thing else being but created, cannot satisfy the soul without the up-taking of God himself, who only can stay the mind, and these created excellencies as they point Him out, the knowledge of whom is the happiness of Angels, who are also His creatures, yet neither see they Him bodily, nor do they comprehend Him fully.

*Quest. 2.* Do then all see and enjoy Him alike, and in an equality?

*Ans.* In this sight and happiness, consider, 1. the object seen and beholden, as the manner or capacity of seeing and beholding, 3. the effects of satisfaction following thereupon. 1. The object of this happiness, is God and his Son Jesus: there

there is one object to all. 2. The manner of up-taking is different, for before men can conceive of God, there must be an elevating or capacitating of them by heavenly qualifications for it, and a condescending on Gods part to suit manifestations of himself to their capacities, even when they are enlarged: This in glory (as here in grace) may be different, some more enlarged to conceive more of God, some lesse, yet all have the same object. The third, to wit, the consolation which followeth, may be called equal in some respect: for, they are all satisfied and filled, and can desire no more; yet, in the

former respect, there is lesse or more according to their measure. God, 1. proportioning them (to speak so) in several sizes, then filling all; Even as suppose many vessels of diverse quantities were cast into the sea, that ocean can fill all, and it's the same ocean whereof they are all full; yet some hold more, some lesse: or, suppose some looking to a lovely object, that are more or lesse able to discern, though none be defective in their sight. All behold the same object and discern it to their satisfaction, though some see it more distinctly, yet all of them satisfyingly; So it is here in beholding Gods face.

## LECTURE II.

Verf. 6. *And he said unto me, These sayings are faithfull and true. And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.*

7. *Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophesie of this book.*

8. *And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel, which shewed me these things.*

9. *Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.*

10. *And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophesie of this book: for the time is at hand.*

11. *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.*

12. *And behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.*

**T**He body of this Book and Prophecie is now past: followeth to the end, the conclusion, which serveth to the confirming and commending of the whole Prophecie, especially of the last vision. It hath five parts, 1. The Angel confirmeth and commendeth what is said, *ver. 6, 7.* 2. There is a mistake of *Johns* recorded, *ver. 8.* 3. The angel, as being interrupted by that superstitious humility of *John*, returneth, after checking of him, to go on, *ver. 9, 10, 11.* Then, 4. cometh in the Master, our blessed Lord, to speak to the same purpose, *ver. 12.* till *ver. 20.* Where, 5. *John* closeth all with a wish for Christs coming and the Churches happinesse, as Epistles use to be closed.

The Angel doth, first, confirm this prophecie (*ver. 6.*) by two arguments. 1. *These sayings are faithfull and true*, the matter is sure; for, the sayings are such, as upon them we may lay weight. *They are faithfull*: such a commendation the Gospel getteth, *1 Tim. 1. 15.* and it is frequent in this Book. It is added and repeated before the close, (especially with respect to the former vision) because, 1. it is of concernment to give credit to it; 2. because what is spoken of heaven, often amongst men passeth as a tale that is told and getteth little credit; but however, faith he, these sayings are worthy of it.

The second argument, is, That they are revealed by the Lord God of the holy prophets, (it is expressly said of Christ (*Chap. 1.*) that he sent his Angel; and here (*ver. 20.*) that He testifieth these things; which sheweth that he is God) who hath

sent his Angel to shew unto His servants the things which must shortly be done; The force of it is thus, They must be faithfull sayings; for, that same God who before revealed things to his people by his Prophets (of which things never one failed) He hath now sent to reveal them by His Angel, Therefore they must also be faithfull, as the former words were, seeing He is still omniscient and faithfull who revealeth them. They are called *holy Prophets*, 1. because God made use of holy men to be pen-men of his Word, *1 Pet. 1. 21.* 2. Because the things spoken, had effect and were not lies. God is called *their God*, especially, 1. because of the peculiar service and commission He put on them beside others, 2. because of his owning their message as well as themselves.

Thirdly, The things are said to come to passe shortly, that is, they are not long to be suspended, therefore every one is concerned in them, before long they will be finished, but even from that time they were to begin in their series.

*Verf. 7.* He commendeth this Prophecie (being compared with *verf. 6.*) in two, 1. That it was sent, and that by an Angel to his servants for their behoove; an argument that should put them to search into it, seeing he sent it. A second, from the happinesse of these who shall make right use of it, both in reading and keeping it, it being profitable for knowledge and practice, yea (compared with *ver. 3. Chap. 1.*) it saith that people read and know as much as they practise, which saying doth exceedingly commend the studying of this Book in sobriety, blessednesse being so oft attributed to the right searchers thereof.



The word, Behold, I come quickly, is shrite in this Chapter repeated, and prefixed here to be a spur to study and to keep the sayings of this Book: for, did men walk with the apprehension of Christs coming quickly, there would be more study to know his will, and more conscience to practise it. This would be in all our thoughts, we may see, why the things prophesied of here, are said shortly to come to passe, that is, in the same sense that Christ cometh quickly, that so men may observe them the better, and be the more watchful in reference to them.

The second thing followeth, *vers. 8.* which is John's second mistake, wherein he had fallen before, *Chap. 19. 10.* when he beareth and seeth these things, he falleth down to worship before the Angel that revealed them; whereby it is clear, that hitherto it was an Angel that spake to John, in the name of the Lord; and it appeareth also, that John knew him to be an Angel; for so, (*ver. 6.*) he had called himself, who was employed in this: It is like, that as *Chap. 19.* the glorious sight and good news of the happy estate of the Church militant, getting that commendation that they were the true sayings of God, *Ch. 19. ver. 9.* overwhelmed him some way there; to think more of this revealer than he ought; It is like the same being represented to him of the Church triumphant (which to him is new, and which the glory of the militant Church was not) he hath been overwhelmed, as it were, with joy, and again fallen in too much admiration of the revealer (I mean the instrumental revealer) of such glad things. The words were opened, *Chap. 19. 10.* There he called himself one that had the testimony of Jesus Christ: here is added, *he is a fellow-servant of these that keep the sayings of this book*, to shew, that not only John, but all the Believers have one Master with Angels; and therefore on this ground, the least of them ought no worship to Angels, but to the Master, as the opposition cleareth. Where again it is observable, 1. that It is a special note of a Believer to keep the sayings of this Book. 2. That the more John putteth honour, which is not due, upon Angels, they debase themselves, as it were, the more; not only John's fellow-servant, but fellow-servant to the lowest, which was not so plain before. And if on this account Angels plead against worship from John, so do they against worship from any in that relation with him. 3. It appeareth here that men, even holy men, may relapse in the same sin, and that they cannot abide much appearing glory in creatures, but they are ready to give too much unto them. 4. Here is an example of a godly man, his falling again in the same sin after he was reproved by the Angel, and no question repented of it, being of such a heavenly frame when he was reproved. This, it is like, was Abrahams case, in twice denying his wife, *Gen. 12.* and *Ch. 20.* And Jehoshaphats with Ahab and Jehoram. 5. It appeareth that the reason why the Angel calleth himself (*Ch. 19. 10.*) one who had the testimony of Jesus Christ, is, because (as *ver. 6.*) he is now employed for revealing Jesus Christs mind, as holy Prophets of old were in revealing his mind to his Church.

From *ver. 9.* to 16. followeth the third part. First, (*ver. 9.*) the Angel putteth by and checketh John for this fault of his, as is said. Then (*ver. 10.*) he returneth to prosecute his purpose in several directions and reasons including commendations of the duties directed unto.

The first direction is special to John, *ver. 10.* Seal not the sayings of the prophesie of this book. Seal not here, is not understood as to its sureness (for, that is out of question) but as to hiddenesse or secretnesse; let not, saith he, this book lye closed, as *Isa. 29. 11.* and *8. 16.* that it be not useful to the Church; for, more is imported than is expressed, as appeareth by the reasons, the Lamb opened not the seals of this book, that they should again be closed: that is not the end it is given for, but on the contrary, let it be publick for their behoof,

and the reason is, *for the time is at hand.* The seals which are the first propheticall vision (properly) they are daily fulfilling and the rest come on. It is an allusion unto *Isa. 8.* and *29.* with *Dan. 12.* where mention is made of sealing these prophesies, because they were to be dark, and little useful to that generation, being for the time to come, for many dayes. See *Dan. 8.* and so on the contrary, no sealing must hold forth their clearnesse, or Christs mind that they should be so, seeing there was use to be made of them.

This command of publishing the Prophesie may be thought strange, and it may be objected, men may wax worse and worse, and seeing, as Peter saith of lesse obscure Scriptnres, *2 Pet. 3.* They pervert them to their own destruction, much more, it seemeth, it may be said of this which is so dark; and so would the objection conclude, better seal it than no seal it. This is prevented by an answer, usual in the Prophets, keep innot up whatever come of it, like *Ezek. 2. 7.* whether they will hear or forbear. And this is followed with a twofold qualification, 1. If it be dark or an offence to any, it will be but to the prophane and vile or filthy, who abuse the best things; it will make none prophane, but filthy persons, who may from their corruption abuse it, as they do the plain truths. But, 2. These who are single and sincere, it will not hinder, but strengthen them in the way of holinesse, and confirm them in the faith of Christ; and so it will be to the one the favour of life unto life, and to the other the favour of death unto death, *2 Cor. 2. 16.* and that is no strange thing, and cannot be attributed to the unsealing of this prophesie; for if it were sealed, that would follow, as we see in *Dan. 12. 9, 10.* &c. This is the simple scope of this Verse, we may read it in the future time (as it is common to the Hebrews, to which stile John cometh near here) and so it telleth what will be the effect, some will offend at it, some will get good of it; or, in the imperative, let them be filthy still: It is no dispensation, but an holy regardlesse that God hath of such filthy persons as will not be made clean, but maketh a share of their table, let it be so, saith he, as *Rom. 11.* and *Hos. 4.* Ephraim is joyned to idols, let him alone; he will not part with them, that is his sin, and let it be his plague: so here.

If any should question the meaning of that, *let him be just, let him be just still*; or, (it being the word in the Original that signifieth justified) he that is justified, let him be so still. *Ans.* The word may, and we think doth keep its proper signification here, as it is distinguished from sanctification and inherent holinesse. The simple meaning is, they who are in Christ, shall not be shaken out of that estate, but shall still so continue whatever come of others. Thus still signifieth not an increase of degrees (which may also be in this as to our sense, and that well agreeth to the scope) but a continuance of that estate, as the word *still* is sundry times rendered, *supra, vers. 3.* And that it must be so, appeareth by this; that holinesse or sanctification is expressly distinguished from this of being just, as denoting a different thing. Therefore Bellar. hath no ground from this (which is the only place alleged from the New Testament) to say that *Similes* sometimes signifieth to make just by inherent holinesse. This is a simple declaring of the effects that should follow severally on hearers, some perverse spirits shall offend, but all the godly, both as to their justification and sanctification shall be preserved, Therefore there needeth no scarring to bring forth this prophesie.

A second qualification is, *ver. 12.* And behold, I come quickly, &c. that is, be doing, (for that negative, seal not the sayings, *ver. 10.* includeth the contrary affirmative, reveal them) for, though it be abused for a time, I am coming quickly, and will call every one to an account of their carriage, and reward them accordingly, even in reference to their usemaking of this prophesie. This is added to strengthen the former reason, One

One might think it sad that men should so abuse Pearls and such a precious Word, it will not be long so, (saith the Lord) but I my self will come to execute justice on all, which shall be suitable and proportionable to mens carriage, that is, vengeance on these that continue filthy, and glory and honour to such as continue holy, *Rom. 2. 8.* And this word is an advertisement to all to take heed how they live under means, for so must they answer and be judged according to their works. And the Lord cometh in abruptly, as it were, to continue the same matter (for, the title which He afterward assumeth, sheweth it to be Himself) thereby declaring that it was His Word, and by His Authority which the messenger spoke mediately, as when He speaketh immediately Himself.

By occasion of this judgement, there is a word of great concernment set down, till *ver. 16.* for we take this *13. ver.* (which beareth plainly our Christs name) to be His own words, coming in here to confirm what the Angel had said in His name before; and, so *ver. 14.* and *15.* are to be read in

a *Paraphrasis* as the Angels words set down for advertisement; and (*ver. 16.*) Christ is again brought in proceeding in His speaking. The like may be seen in these words, *Chap. 16. ver. 15. Blessed is he that watcheth, &c.* where the writer, upon the occasion of judgement formerly mentioned breaketh forth into that advertisement. However, though these words here, *ver. 14.* be the Angels words (in that he saith [*His*] *Commandments*) yet the scope and matter is the same, and it is certain, *ver. 16.* Jesus Christ Himself taketh it on Him, and therefore telleth, it is He now and no Angel, but He who sendeth Angels that speaketh.

This saying of His, *I come quickly, v. 12.* is for confirming what He said of the happiness of these that keeped this word: and this name of His, *ver. 13.* is repeated for confirming that of His coming quickly to reward every one, because He is God, who as He gave a being to all for His own glory, so He will exact an account thereof.

## LECTURE III.

*Verf. 13. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.*

*14. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.*

*15. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.*

*16. I Jesus have sent mine Angel, to testify unto you these things in the Churches. I am the root and the off-spring of David, and the bright and morning star.*

*17. And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, Come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

*18. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophesie of this book, If any man shall adde unto these things, God shall adde unto him the plagues that are written in this book.*

*19. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophesie, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

*20. He which testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, Come Lord Jesus.*

*21. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*

**B**Efore the Spirit close this Book, much is spent of that part which is the Conclusion, on these two. 1. in confirming the truth of what is delivered in the prophesie. 2. In the commending of the excellency of it. After (*ver. 16.*) He hath given direction by the Angel not to seal these sayings, and having removed an objection that stood in the way, *ver. 11.* He confirmeth and commendeth these sayings, 1. By Christs approaching coming to reckon with folks how they made use of this Scripture and warning, *ver. 12.* 2. From the sovereignty of Him who offered it, it was not an Angel, but the eternal God, *ver. 13.* 3. He commendeth it from the happiness of these that truly maketh use of these words, *ver. 14.* which verse is answerable to *ver. 3.* of *Chap. 1.* Then, 4. He commendeth this Scripture from the contrary misery that shall come on all, who shall by their own fault be excluded from this happiness, *15.* These

are done by several witnesses, sometimes by John, sometimes by Jesus Christ, sometimes by the Spirit, sometimes by the Angels. He goeth on to confirm the truth of what hath been delivered; and the first confirmation, is, *ver. 13.* (which as it relateth to all the prophesie, so doth it especially to the former of Christs coming quickly (*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last:* I, that speak and have sent this Book to my Church, am God; and will perform what I have spoken). The words hold out Christs eternity, not only as being before and after all things, but as giving all things a being, and ordering all things to their ends, and to His own glory as the great end of all, He is the beginning of the Creation of God, *Rev. 3. 14.*

This commendation is prophecuted, *ver. 14.* and *15.*  
Q q q 2 from



from the happiness of them that so make right use of all the Word of God, & especially of the words contained in this book. The happiness and the persons to whom it belongeth, are first set down, *ver. 14. Blessed are they that do his commandments.* Blessedness is the most desirable thing that is looked for: and thus, blessed are they that keep his Word and obey it. And though this general be true, yet considering *ver. 3. of Chap. 1. and ver. 7. of this Chapter*, and the scope here to be one with these (to commend this prophesie,) we take the commandments, spoken of here, especially to look to the sayings of this prophesie. And so it is, Blessed are they that keep the sayings of this Book, the Lord foreseeing that this Book was to meet with more opposition than other Books of holy Scripture, and there being a general reluctancy in all to make use of it, therefore though but six or seven times *blessedness* be spoken of in it, yet it is thrice applied to them that keep the sayings of this prophesie, particularly these which relate to the keeping of clean garments, from the corruptions of Antichrist, and of the time, and to the putting of us in a posture of waiting for his coming.

This blessedness is branched out several wayes more particularly, 1. that they may have right to the tree of life, that is to the happiness the Saints have in glory, and especially to Jesus Christ the objective and fountain-happiness of the Saints, as *ver. 2. of this Chapter, and Chap. 2.* The meanings is, they shall have right to Jesus Christ, and glory in heaven with him: Not that doing of the commandments is the meritorious cause of this or that which giveth Believers right to it. But for clearing it, consider Christ two wayes holden out in the Word, 1. As he is the ground and purchaser of Salvation to Believers in him, and so believing is that which giveth right to him and all that is in him, according to the offer which is the ground of our faith. 2. Consider him as the object in whom Believers happiness consisteth, and in the enjoying of whom there is life, as *Col. 3. 4.* Christ being thus looked on, as the object of their happiness, keeping of the commandments is the way wherein we come to enjoy him: and this agreeth well with that word, *Heb. 12. 14. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.* And hereby the necessity of holiness, and obedience to his commandments, is holden forth, without which (*Col. 1. 12.*) we are not meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light: for though holiness and obedience be not the way unto, or *causa sine qua non*, of our justification, or to Christ considered as the meritorious cause of it, who is thus to be closed with by faith alone; yet are they to our glorification, and to the immediate enjoying of him in heaven.

The second branch of their happiness, is, *They shall enter in through the gates into the City*, that is, into the new Jerusalem, and the glory that the Saints have to look for in heaven, *Chap. 21. and beginning of Chap. 22.* their holiness endeth in happiness and glory; there is no coming to heaven but by this door no climbing over the walls; for, the Angels are porters. The meaning is, the studier of holiness, shall have full access into heaven, like a man that hath a pass and getteth liberty to enter in the city, when the sentinell keepeth others back, and they are not admitted, *2 Pet. 1. 11. So an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly, into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord*: whereby it is clear, that this city is heaven, and the way to it, is holiness; and to hope to come to heaven and to live in prophaneness, is as if folks would think to clim over the walls, and not enter by the ports into it: We may well say, that though holiness be not the cause of our entry, yet it is our pass, by which it is known who are to be admitted or have right to enter, and who not.

The third way how this happiness is set out, is by holding out the misery of all that are prophane, *ver. 15. for without are*

*dogs and sorcerers, &c.* This is given as a reason why they are happy that shall have access into the city, because without are such and such vile persons; and as a reason why they are blessed that are holy, because profane ones are shut out: under which we comprehend all that are disobedient, and such as cast the Word and commandments of God. And it letteth us see how God esteemeth of all that give not themselves up to the obedience of the Truth. Of these sorts of sinners we spoke, *Chap. 21. 8.* Only dogs are added here that is, 1. Such as are prophane in conversation, and will not take reproofs, such as amend not, *Matth. 7. 6. Give not that which is holy to dogs.* 2. These that are opposit to truth, in doctrine, and vent and spread what is unsound, as *Philip. 3. 2. Beware of dogs, &c.* speaking of these teachers that did mix the righteousness of the law with the righteousness of Christ in justification. These also are without, that is, are in the second death, *Chap. 21. 8.*

From *Ver. 16.* and forward, followeth the Lord Jesus his own close to the same purpose, to confirm and commend the truth of the words of this prophesie. In the 16. verse it is commended from the fountain it cometh from, *I Jesus have sent mine Angel to testify these things in the Churches.* These are not Johns inventions, nor the sayings of an Angel out of his own head, but they are from me, I own them all, I Jesus (taking His proper name to himself) have sent mine Angel in more than an ordinary way, to reveal these things to my servant John and by him to the Churches, to the end of the world. And that this may have the more weight, he taketh to himself such titles as he took to himself before, *Chap. 2. and 3. I am the root and off-spring of David, the bright and morning star*, to bring souls in love with him: he setteth out himself as the very Messiah come of David, as *Chap. 5. 5. The Lion of the tribe of Judah, and the root of David*, and the off-spring of David as man, because as man he came of David, and so is the promised Messiah, as *Isaiah 11. 1. There shall come a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots, &c.* Or, take the words differently, I am the root of David, that is, Davids God, and David is as a branch, and I gave him a being: And I am the Off-spring of David, that is, as man I am a branch come of David. And thus he answereth the question the Pharisees could not understand, *Matth. 22. 43. If David call him Lord, how is he then his son?* He is Davids Lord as God, and Davids son as man, so is he his root and off-spring. 2. He calleth himself the bright and morning star: he is called a star by Balaam, *Num. 24. 17. There shall a star come out of Jacob*, and this relateth to that, but to shew that he is not a common star, but a singular one: he is called the bright and morning star, or day-star that bringeth the light of the day with it, holding himself out as the fountain of all light and consolation as *John 1. 9. He is that true light that lighteth every one that cometh into the world.* This is he that sendeth this message to the Churches, and that now we read of, he that brought life and immortality to light, &c. These titles are foolishly applied (to say no more) to the Virgin Mary, as many others are by *Bernardine de Busco de denominationibus Mariæ.*

The second commendation is in a twofold Come, *ver. 17. The Spirit and the Bride, say, Come. And let him that heareth, say, Come.* This is such a word so excellent and true a word, and so comfortable a saying, that all that have the Spirit in them when they hear it, will say, Come, and wish a performance of it; and the Bride the Lambs wife, all the Glorified in heaven, and all the Regenerate on earth concur in it; and not only the Church universal for that time, but all that shall hear this word, and have the faith of it in their heart, shall say, *Come.* We conceive the scope is, 1. To commend this word from the desirableness of it to all Believers, especially that word, *Verse 12. Behold I come quickly*, 2. To let the Church know that he is to send no more new Scripture or Messages of

of this sort, and that they have no more to expect but the coming of the Lord on the back of the fulfilling of this Prophecy. And so as *Malachy*, in his last Chapter, closes the Canon of the old Testament with a promise of Christs first coming, and putteth the People of God to the Law of *Moses* and the Prophets till then, so Christ here closeth the Canon of the New Testament with a promise of His second coming, to which He knitteth the longing desires of His Church.

The second *Come*, that commendeth the excellency of this Book, *Let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.* Is there yet any body that is not clear in their interest, let them come and take this word before Christ come; for, he will not get another word: as if He said, I have made many fair and free offers, and now I close My last offer with a good word, *whoever will* take Christ, and life through Him freely, on the terms of free grace, *let him come*, and take Him without money and without price, *Isa. 55. 1.* This is our Lords farewell, that He may press the offer of the Gospel and leave that impression, as it were, upon record amongst the last words of the Scripture; and His scope is to commend this Book and the offers He hath made in it, as most free and on the terms of grace, wherein Christ almerth much to draw souls to accept it, And teacheth us that all that would expect comfort of His coming, and pray for it with a well-grounded confidence, they would first come to Him, and close with Him, and make use of His offer. This maketh a comfortable meeting with Him, and who cannot say the first *come* to Christ, that he may come, let themselves come to Him, and hear and answer His call to them, that so they may turn over their request to Him.

The third way how He commendeth this word, is by putting a testimony to the perfection of it, *vers. 18.* telling that nothing can be added to it, and nothing can be diminished from it as superfluous, and both these are set down by way of commination, and it is given as a reason why folks should expect no more Scripture after this. 1. Let any man beware of adding to these things. Adding may be considered formally as denoting the enjoying of any thing for Scripture, or to be accounted as such, which is not contained in this Book, or declared by God immediately to be such as this is. Or, 2. as adding upon the matter, by putting or imposing a meaning on that which is written, that God never intended, or which the words will not bear. Therefore deceivers and wretches of the Word, are called Impostours, as imposing: the curse that is threatned on them that add any of thir ways, *Is, God shall add to him the plagues that are written in this Book,* that is, He shall bring upon him all the curses threatned to come on the openly profane and secret hypocrites, or Antichrists followers.

And that it may be known; that it is no less fault to diminish than to add, he telleth, *vers. 19.* *If any shall take away from the words of this Prophecie,* that is, either by taking away something that is canonick, and derogating from the authority of the Scripture, or by hyding or detracting from the meaning of it (for, both these ways the Word is diminished, when the weight of Gods authority in the truth is diminished, or when folks receive not the Truth and walk not in the obedience of it.) The threatening that is added to this, *God shall take away his part out of the Book of life, &c.* that is, that man shall never come into glory; it shall be declared he was never written in the Book of life, and he shall be shut out of heaven; for, never a promise of happiness, in all the Word, belongeth to that man. And so as *Moses* when he gave the Law, *Deut. 4. 2.* and *12. 32.* commandeth neither to add nor diminish. And *Prov. 30. 6.* *Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee,* So also our Lord Jesus sealeth the New Testament, but with a more severe threatening: and that word (*Deut. 4. 2.*) *That ye may keep the Commandments of the Lord,*

sheweth that the keeping he meaneth of, consisteth not in the letter but in the practice and conversation, by making the Word our rule in our walk. In which words, as all diminishing from Scripture, so all addition under whatsoever pretext, is condemned: by which the bulk of Popish traditions is justly rejected.

If it be objected that this threatening is only in reference to this book, but hindereth not but that something by tradition may be added to others, or to the Scripture in general. *Ans. 1.* Yet this book is looked on here as the close of all Scripture, and therefore there can be no other reason given for adding this certification, but to restrain men from looking for more, and that they may now accept the Canon closed. 2. This is simply against mans adding to Gods Word, and putteth marches betwixt Gods word and mans of whatsoever nature; for, the Scriptures are Gods Word, but traditions are mans: and either they are for their matter grounded on the Word and so are contained in it, or not grounded on it or contained in it. If they be of the first sort, they are no more Gods Word, but as other consequents drawn from it. If of the second sort, then they are manifest additions, and so in this opposed to the Word. 3. Adding must be so understood, as diminishing or taking away must be; But taking away is so to be understood as to make that no Scripture which God hath appointed to be so, whatever the matter of it be: and therefore to add, must be to account any thing Scripture, or as Scripture, which God hath not so appointed to be. Hence as it were by this condemnableness to suppress any book that were canonick, because the matter of it were in an other Book; even so, on the contrary, must it be here reproved, to add any book unto, or to equal it with Scripture in Authority, which is not contained in the Canon, 4. Do not the same reasons that condemn adding to this book in particular, condemn adding to the Word in general, or to any other book thereof? so that as we cannot add some prophecies to this book out of traditions, and call them, or account them, a part of the revelation, or of equal authority with it; so neither may we from tradition joyn any thing to any other book, or to the Word in general; for, the reason is one, God will reserve this piece of Sovereignty to Himself to decide what shall be accounted His revelation, and will have no other meddling with it, so also with His Word in general. 2. He will keep men from encroaching on what He hath reserved to Himself: and indeed it seemeth by this commination, that He esteemeth it highest arrogancy and lese-majesty to alter in any thing His Word, which is the most sacred and sovereign thing which He hath left with His Church, and wherein His name and supremacy doth especially consist.

The close of all, is Christs speaking a word as His drawing to an end, *ver. 20.* *He that testifieth these things, saith, Surely, I come quickly.* It is He that speaketh, *ver. 16, 18.* that testifieth these things, and that which He saith is a promise, or prophesie of Christs coming, and of the certainty and suddeny of His coming to Judgment. 2. And the last words of the verse are an hearty and warm welcome, that *John* in the name of all Believers, or the Bride giveth to this truth, promise, or prophesie of the coming of the Lord, *Amen:* not only let it be so, but I wish, and long, and pray that it may be so, *Even so,* or, *So be it, Come, Lord Jesus,* as Thou hast promised.

There is here then a promise made, which *John* turneth up to God in a most fervent supplication not only for himself, but for the whole Church of Christ also, upon the hearing and consideration of this, that Christ is to come again and receive Believers to Himself, that where He is, there they may be also: such ejaculations of the soul will often interrupt the thoughts and discourses of these who are in the faith of being found of Him in peace at His appearance, the lively apprehension



of what they do expect at that day, when they shall see Him as He is, produceth such a sweet complacency in it, and stirring of heart to be possessed of it, that there must needs follow such ardent desires after it as will almost prevent all deliberation: for, excellent objects have such an amiable aspect upon the soul, and attractive power over the heart, that it most willingly yieldeth up itself, and as if it were all composed of desires, it breatheth forth nothing but earnest wishes after a nearness and inseparable conjunction with that object. Now, what can be proposed to the immortal soul like this, to hear Christ say, *Behold, I come quickly?* truly the apprehension is at a stand in unfolding that blessedness which is included in this one sentence, it goeth beyond the reach of a created understanding to search it out unto perfection; for eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what is here imported. And therefore no wonder to see it draw such a holy heart forcibly out after it, breathing out all the way such a desire, *Even so, Come, Lord Jesus, Come quickly*, as if his heart intended by this wish to anticipate that day: But because he knew the Bride was not yet made ready, and that there was a long tract of time to interveen betwixt the giving of this promise and that day wherein the marriage of the Lamb shall be solemnized, when He shall bring her unto the King, all glorious within, in cloathing of wrought gold and raiment of needle work, with the virgins her companions that follow her, that they may enter the Kings Palace, to be with Him there for ever; and because he knew, that before this there were many sad emergents and searching dispensations to be met with, such winds to blow as should overblow every one who was not ballasted with the grace of God, such false Doctrines to be spread as would carry about every one whose heart was not established by grace, such deceivers privily bringing in damnable heresies, that if it were possible the very Elect should be deceived, so many duties to be done, and so much affliction to be suffered as were impossible to be performed and born without the assistance of special grace, Therefore as the conclusion of the whole, *verse last*, he desireth *that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ may be with them all*, as that which by its sensible presence or supporting influence, would carry them through whatsoever they might meet with; for, there is no difficulty so great which will not vanish and disappear before His grace; and a gracious man is able to do and suffer all things through Christ who strengtheneth him. This grace is indeed the one thing necessary, to make a man

carry creditably for the Gospel and comfortably to himself in all cases that may be incident: he who is strengthened by the might of His grace in the inner-man, will be stedfast and immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. And therefore it is no wonder, that one who was seen in the concerning events which should fall out till the second coming of Christ, did wrap up all his desires for the Saints with an *Amen*, in this one wish, *The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you all*. The very pulse of a holy soul beareth still this way, his temper may be known by the ordinary unconstrained and habitual desires of his heart: Let others wish to themselves and their friends what they please, that which a holy man wisheth to himself and these whom he loveth best, is this, that the grace of Jesus Christ may be with them; he would have his own desires, with the desires and endeavours of every man else, terminate upon this. If ye ask him, what he feareth most? It is this, lest he come short of the grace of God; Or, what his hopes are most upon? It is for that grace which is to be brought unto him at the revelation of Jesus Christ: this is the very character of a Christian good case, that he is one who is waiting for the appearance of Jesus Christ, and that grace which is to be brought with Him; the expectation of this is the rest of his soul, he feedeth upon it constantly, when he is alone, the thoughts of it keep him company, and he maketh this his companion in whatsoever company he be: In a word, he is content to be empty of all things beside, that out of His fulness he may receive grace for grace; this to him is one thing necessary, and therefore he maketh it his choice. Happy, yea, thrice happy is every one who doth so: for he hath chosen that good part that shall never be taken from him.

The worthy and pious Author of this Treatise (whose communication was habitually good for the use of edifying, and such as did minister grace to the Hearers, being about to leave this world, to which he was dead when alive, while all that were about him did see him pining for God, for the living God, as the Hart doth after the water brooks) a little before he fell asleep, desired one of them who stood by, to write for a close to this Commentary, these following words, (worthy to be graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock for ever.) *And now, O my soul, when all says Come, and concurs in a sweet harmony, seeing thou hast heard, and dost hear the Call of the Gospel, say with the Bride and with the Spirit, Even so, Come Lord Jesus, Come quickly.*

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F I N I S.

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## A brief View of the Series of the whole Book of the REVELATION.



His whole Book is formed by way of an Epistle.

*Chap. 1.* Beside some general circumstances, the matter of the Book generally is divided (*Chap. 1.*) In these two, 1. The things that then were, or the present state of these Churches especially, 2. The things that were to come on the Church in general, to the end of the world.

*Chap. 2, and 3.* contain the first part, the present condition of these seven Churches, set out in seven several Epistles, shewing their case, and reprov-  
ing or commending accordingly, as was requisite: and withall, adding directions, warnings, threatnings and consolations suitable to their respective conditions, which though expressly directed to these, yet are alike useful to all in such cases to the end.

*Chap. 4, and 5.* contain the Preface introductory to the main and prophetic part of this Book: where God the Creator, is set on His Throne, and His glory, as absolute supream Lord of all, is set down, having all events determined in His Counsel, as in a Book that is sealed, in the which no creature can pry to reveal them, except Jesus Christ, who, by the executing of His Office of Mediatorship, is found worthy to be admitted on Gods eternal secrets concerning the Church, Who therefore in that fifth Chapter receiveth these as in a book, sealed with seven seals, which he openeth distinctly (keeping the same comparison) in the Chapters following which contain three principal and other three explicatory Prophecies; the three principal Prophecies of Seals, Trumpets and Vials, deducing the events from that time to the end by several steps, and the explicatory Prophecies, clearing what was more shortly or obscurely set down in the other, and contemporating with them, or some part of them.

*Chap. 6.* We have the first principal Prophecie of the Seals, which setteth forth the state of the Church under its first period, to wit, of heathenish persecution. In it the Church, is, first, discovered as flourishing in respect of the Gospels thriving, *Seal 1.* Then as bloudy in respect of persecution, *Seal 2.* After that as decaying and losing much of its beauty, not only by the persecution of enemies, but by the contests and failings that were in and amongst her friends, *Seal 3.* After which, persecution came to a vehement height, as if death had been loosed against the Church in the last part of the ten persecutions, *Seal 4.* whereupon the souls cry to God, as being at an uttermost strait, *Seal 5.* Upon which followeth Gods judgement upon these persecutors, *Seal 6.* at which the first period of the Churches condition, and the first principal prophecie of Seals do end.

The Church having now gotten outward prosperity and peace, and not having made good use of it, there are (*Chap. 7.*) other sorts of winds ready to blow, and fearful heresies to set on her, especially that defection of Antichrist: all which she is to be advertised of by the Trumpets; but because that exercise would be more stirring and carry more of the visible Church away than open persecuti-

on did, Therefore before the Trumpets sound, the Lord giveth a little view of the future state of the Church in reference to the two following principal Prophecies. The first part is to *ver. 9.* showing Gods care in guarding His Elect against that storm before it came: this belongeth to the Trumpets. The second sheweth the good outcome that the Church should have after that storm, from *ver. 9.* to the end: and this giveth a hint of the Vials.

The Lord Christ having thus provided against these evils by this consolation, *Chap. 7.* and having first interposed by His intercession in the beginning of this *Chap. 8.* Then He giveth order to the Angels to sound their Trumpets. These do contain the second principal Prophecie, and belong to the second period of the Church, to wit, from the Churches begun peace, after heathenish persecution, till Antichrist come up by his steps to his height. This is contained in the 8, 9, 10, and 11. Chapters. The first Angel foretelleth the rising of a violent heresie, to wit, *Arianism*, whereby the beauty of the Church was exceedingly defaced. The second foretelleth the great pride and contention that was to follow among Church-men, which should be no little stirring to many, and make way for the working of the mystrie of iniquity. The third forwarneth of the corrupting of the principal doctrines and fountain-truths of Grace and the Gospel. The fourth holdeth forth the more general decay of piety, purity and simplicity in the Church, in the age before Antichrists revealing, though not yet at its height: and when warning is given of three greater woes than any of these, the eighth Chapter is closed.

In *Chap. 9.* two of the last great woes are set down: the first, or fifth, Trumper, describeth Antichrists Kingdom, and by the description thereof, and names given to him, the evil that cometh thereby to the Church, is expressed. The second great wo, or sixth Trumper, setteth out Gods severe judging of a great part of the Christian world for that defection, by letting loose the *Turks* upon it, which with great Armies destroyed many, and overcame a great part of the Empire: yet these that were spared did not repent, nor forsake their idolatry and superstitions for all that, but Popery grew in its corruption, even as the *Turks* grew in their Dominion.

In *Chap. 10.* and 11. because these were sad evils, whereby the Church was brought low, and were to be of longer continuance than any of the former lesser woes, therefore, before the seventh Angel sound, the Lord setteth down a twofold consolation, *Chap. 10.* and till *ver. 15.* of the 11. where the seventh soundeth, meeting with two objections: first, men might think shall enemies then get their will, and the Church be thus still obscured, when the seventh Trumper cometh, what will come of her? the Lord by an oath (*Chap. 10.* assureth His People, that it shall not be so; but that the Church shall be revived, and that that seventh Trumper shall bring judgement on her enemies and quite turn the chase. And because it might be yet further doubted if there were a Church during that time till the seventh did sound, it is shown (*Chap.*



(*Chap. 11.*) that there should be a Church, and some Ministers still adhering to the former principles of the Gospel, whom all enemies, no not the beast Antichrist, should be able to overcome, till they should be at the close of their testimony, and God have others to take it off their hand. Then the seventh Angel soundeth when their testimony is finished, and a very great and most glorious change is wrought, which is generally hinted at here, but more fully expressed by the Vials, which are the third principal or typical Prophecy of this Book, and contain the last period of the militant Churches condition, to wit, Antichrists decay, and her enlargement after she hath been at her lowest, and he at his height: a little view of it is given here before the seven Vials be explained, because he is to interpose the explication of what was past, in the three Chapters following.

But before he set down the vials upon the blowing of the seventh trumpet (as he had set down the trumpets on the back of the seven seals,) the first explicatory prophesie is interjected, *Chap. 12. 13. and 14.* and that in a different stile. This serveth to clear the two principal prophesies past, and maketh way exceedingly for understanding what was coming; and in this, the same troubles, and state of the Church, formerly prophesied of, are here again touched in their several steps of her difficulties with their respective outgates.

1. The Churches wrestling with heathen persecution, that was described by the seals, is set out by the similitude of a travelling woman, pursued by a red Dragon; her outgate is under the expression of delivery, when her birth is

*Chap. 12.* exalted, *ver. 5.* of *Chap. 12.* which war is more fully prosecuted, with its outgate, to *ver. 13.* by this the devil is dethroned from the publick authority he had in the world while Emperours were heathen, and authority is now on the Churches side. The second step, is the Churches troubles that followed on the back of that outgate: it is hinted, *ver. 6.* that she fled or began to flee, (to shew the connexion of this decay with the former liberty) but is prosecuted, from *ver. 13.* where the devils device to drown her, by spewing out of his mouth a flood of filthy errors after her, is marked, when as by violence or authority he could not master her: the outgate from this, is *ver. 16.* the Lord provideth a way to drain these errors that they should not drown her; the earth, that is, the then declining visible Church, that continued still visible (called *earth*, because of her declining from that heavenly simplicity she appeared in, *ver. 4.* under heathen persecution, becoming now earthly-like in pomp, and so distinguished from these that kepted their former purity) did still keep the Doctrine of the God-head of the Father, Son and Spirit, pure; so that the pure Church now fleeing (as it were) hath these cruel blasts kept off her, and so diverted from her, as the earths drinking-in of rain suffereth not the floods to encrease.

This is contemporary with the first four trumpets or lesser woes, *Chap. 8.* When this doth not the devils businesse, *ver. 17.* he goeth to his last refuge of stirring up Antichrist and bringing of him to his height, which is the first great wo, *Chap. 9.* And because this is the great design, to hold him forth, and thereby to make way for clearing what was spoken, *Chap. 11.* and what followeth to the end.

Therefore, *Chap. 13.* he more fully insisteth in describing this enemy, 1. in his nature by a double type of two several beasts: the first, showing what really he should be, and what the Church should suffer by him; the second shewing how he should attain to that height, and by what means he should prosecute his designs upon the world, and against the Saints. And then when he hath described his nature, rise, reign, practices, continuance and manner of proceeding, &c. he cometh to shew the outgate,

*Chap. 14.* *Chap. 14.* which contemporateth with the last

part of *Chap. 11.* and is again insisted on by the vials.

Having put by this explication, and given a key of all in this prophecy, he returneth to prosecute where he left, *Chap. 11.* and more fully to shew the events of the seventh trumpet in the seven vials, which is the third principal and typical prophesie, prosecuting the story (to say so) from Antichrists height and begun ruine to the end, which is the third period of the Church. Therefore (*Chap. 15.*) the preparation to it is set down (as the preparations to each of the former principal prophesies were, as, *Chap. 4.* and *5.* to the seals, and *Chap. 7.* to the trumpets) and is, upon the matter, the same with what is *Chap. 11. ver. 16. &c.* to shew that it is the continuation of the same matter. This (I say) is the third period of the Church.

Then (*Chap. 16.*) followeth the prophesie it self. *Chap. 16.* The four first vials are lesser, and more insensibly (as it were) carry on Antichrists ruine (as the four first trumpets did more insensibly encrease his rise:) the fifth vial overturneth *Rome* his seat, as the fifth trumpet seated him there, and revealed him. The sixth overturneth *Turks*, Popes, and the rest of that Kingdom, bringeth in the *Jews*, and setteth the Gospel at its full brightnesse. The seventh vial (sometime after that) bringeth the end upon all enemies, *Gog* and *Magog*, and fully overturneth the devils Kingdom in the world: as the three last trumpets are greatest, so are the three last vials of longest continuance. And because these events are notable, he proceedeth to clear especially the last three vials in two explicatory prophesies or visions, wherein he abstaeth the expression of types and sevens which he had used in the principal prophesies, and in an explicatory way, goeth on, as in *Chap. 12, &c.* The first, is *Chap. 17, 18, 19.* the other thence to the end.

He had described Antichrist himself, *Chap. 13.* *Chap. 17.* Here (*Chap. 17.*) he describeth his seat, his Kingdom and himself together, that he might shew what is the object of the vials, especially of the fifth: which is, in a word, *Rome*, then the chief City of the earth. The more expresse explication whereof, is *Chap. 18.* shewing what the seat is, that is destroyed by the fifth vial; and what lamentation shall be over it, when *Rome* (called *Babylon*) shall be brought to such desolation.

And having described this, he proceedeth, (*Chap. 19.*) to clear the events of the sixth vial, *Chap. 19.* and battel of *Armagedon*, which is notable from two singular events, the one in the conversion of the *Jews* in the first part, the other in the destruction of the beast and his helpers (probably the *Turk*) in the last part thereof, whereby the beast having fled from *Rome*, is now wholly overturned, so that the name of Pope ceaseth by this, as *Rome* his seat did by the former.

Antichrist being destroyed, he cometh to shew the events of the seventh vial, in the last vision, *Chap. 20.* *Chap. 20, 21, 22.* and to make it the more clear and comprehensive of the Churches victory over the devil, he sheweth (*Chap. 20.*) first, how the devil was again restrained after he had been loose, *Chap. 12, 13.* (and so ascendeth as high as the first vial) during which time the Church formerly persecuted, had a most flourishing condition (in respect of what formerly it was) and that for a long time, set out by a thousand years. 2. He sheweth that after that, even when the beast is away by the sixth vial, yet a new enemy ariseth, called *Gog* and *Magog*, which shall mar the Churches peace: and because this event belongeth to the seventh vial, it was necessary to premit Satans binding by the preceeding vials, to it, that it might be the better discerned what was intended by this his new loose. 3. The Churches victory over this enemy is expressed, which we conceive is the proper event of the seventh vial: whereupon

upon followeth the universal Resurrection, consummation of all things, dissolution of heaven and earth, the last Judgement and final sentence upon Reprobates and Elect: that which concerneth Reprobates is set down, *ver. last*, what was their portion after this Judgement, and sentence eternally, they were cast into the lake.

Then *Chap. 21.* he proceedeth more fully to describe the happy estate of the Elect in the beauty and 22. they should be glorified with, the place wherein, the privileges which they should enjoy, and the persons admitted to it only, which is to *ver. 6. of Chap. 22.*

And having put-by the propheticall part, he closeth (as he began) with two generals, commending this prophesie, and advertising of Christs second coming, on the back of all this, warning that His Word be not diminished from, nor any thing added thereunto; withal inviting all to come, and promising Himself to come, as His last farewell: whereupon the Church welcometh it with a new *So be it*, knowing there is no more to be expected but His coming, which she heartily longeth for. After all, *John* closeth the Epistle with a salutation, as he had begun it with an inscription.

There are two men much accounted of for *Grotius, & Hammond.* Learning, whose expositions and applications I have never touched: not because I thought them not absurd, But, because, 1. Their whole strain is to divert Readers (to say no more) from the true scope of this Book, and that not in one vision or prophesie, but in an universal strain more oppositely to orthodox Writers than any Papist that ever wrote of it; the following whereof could not but prove nauseating to any Reader. And, 2. Because who will read them, and soberly compare the Writings of others with the Text, may yet need more direct Writing to evidence the dissonancy of these Commentations, I do professe my self unable to satisfie them, I shall therefore but say these few words,

1. That their application is dissonant from the scope of this Book, which is cleared to be, 1. to shew things to come, *Chap. 1. ult.* 2. Things belonging to the Church and Christs servants peculiarly, as the inscription, repetition of blessedness to the Readers and Observers, with the several circumstances, will clear. 3. To shew especially the trials of the Church from inward enemies, as the hiding of the Elect from the hurt thereof, the description of the enemies spiritual hurt and defection that is foretold to come on the Church, especially that great defection of the great Antichrist, whereof the Scripture speaketh so much, confirmeth it. 4. The scope is to shew the Churches condition under these, to the end of the world: For, 1. It is still useful to his servants as a prophesie, and useful to the end, and they are blessed that shall make use of it as such, at the end, as well as now. 2. It closeth with the last Judgement and the Reprobates casting in hell, *Chap. 20.* and the Elects glorification, *Chap. 21. 22.* with many promises of His last coming; and the prophesie preceeding the day of Judgement is in a series knit with it, which will not admit of many hundred years rent; and that it speaketh of the day of Judgement, the description of it, and the sentence upon all the Reprobate, who are not

written in the Lambs book, will clear it.

Now, these men in their Writings wholly enervat all these, 1. They say it speaketh of things but for a short time (from that word, *Chap. 1. ver. 1. shortly to come to passe, &c.*) which is the ground of all their opinion, yet it inferreth it no more than when He saith, *I come quickly.*

2. They make it of things, for the most part, past, and that of civil things in the Roman Empire, or what concerneth the Jews, without great respect to the Church.

3. Little or no mention is made of spiritual enemies and hereticks, save that they apply to *Simon Magus* what is spoken of the three years and an half: there is not one word of Antichrist in it all, nor of the Pope or Church of Rome, as if that were not of concernment to the Christian Church, whether we should condemn him or approve him. This is the more strange, that although they draw the thousand years from *Constantine's* time, they reckon the Church all the while to have peace, and moveth only an objection from *Julian*, as if no other enemy had never been to interrupt that peace.

2. We say it is inconsistent in respect of the matter they apply it to: for, to what purpose is it to apply that of the two witnesses, *Chap. 11.* to the two Bishops of Jews and Gentiles at Jerusalem, when there is no story for such a thing at Jerusalem? or though it were, yet what is that to such a concerning event so oft spoken of there? and what is that of *Simon Magus* in comparison of the worlds wondering, that is *Chap. 11, 12, and 13, &c.*? How will the heathenish idolatrous high Priests be said to have horns like the Lamb, which must be Christ in that place? *Chap. 13. 11.* How impertinent is it that is said of the seven Kings, whereof one was to come in *John's* time? Beside, that all these were past before *John* wrote the prophesie, as hitherto hath been received from History?

3. We say it is inconsistent with all that ever have written, ancient and modern; even Papists, who though, no question, they would gladly receive such an interpretation to liberate their Pope, yet durst they never hazard on it till these new patrons stepped out.

4. It is also repugnant to themselves: for although much be builded on this, that the effects are suddenly to be brought to passe, because of that word, *Chap. 1. ver. 1. shortly to come to pass;* yet do they both expound *Gog and Magog* (*Chap. 20.*) of the Turks, which to them raiseth after the 1300 year; and say that their destruction, as yet to come, is prophesied of there; yea, *Chap. 21. and 22.* are applied to a state of the Church on earth after the Turks ruine. 2. They (especially the last) seem to offend at particular application to men, yea, to Nations and times, alleaging that these events are of more universal concernment; yet, what is their application but a most strait, particular and narrow one to such Armies and Commanders of the Romans, to *Simon Magus* (who was of little note in the world in respect of some After-heresiarchs that troubled the Church) to a particular Bishop or two Bishops of Jerusalem, as if only they were the Witnesses? These being obvious, and many such, we conceive it not needful to draw every thing into particular examination.



if the ground is not quite level, it is better to have a small mound of earth in the center of the plot, and to plant the trees around it. This will give the trees a better chance of growing, and will also make the plot more attractive to the birds.

1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

[illegible]

...the ... of ...

2. The following are the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various committees of the Board of Directors:

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Of the Popish <i>worshipping</i> of Angels and Saints, and what is to be thought of that mid- <i>worship</i> between civil and religious invented by them,	451, 452
That none are to write without a clear call thereto, and what is sufficient, what not, to clear a mans call to write?	38, 39, 40

## Y

Whether by the thousand years of the Saints reign we are to understand a definit or indefinit time,	466, 467
Whether these years be wholly past or wholly to come, or now current, with the diversity of opinions in this matter,	467
What is to be determined concerning the beginning and close of these 1000. years,	<i>ibid.</i>
If the beginning of these 1000. years be to be reckoned from the beginning of the vials, or is it to be restricted to the seventh vial.	468
The beginning of the thousand years falleth to be about the year 1560. where, some objections to the contrary, are answered,	469

## Z

<i>Zeal</i> often lesse against error than scandalous practices.	97
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